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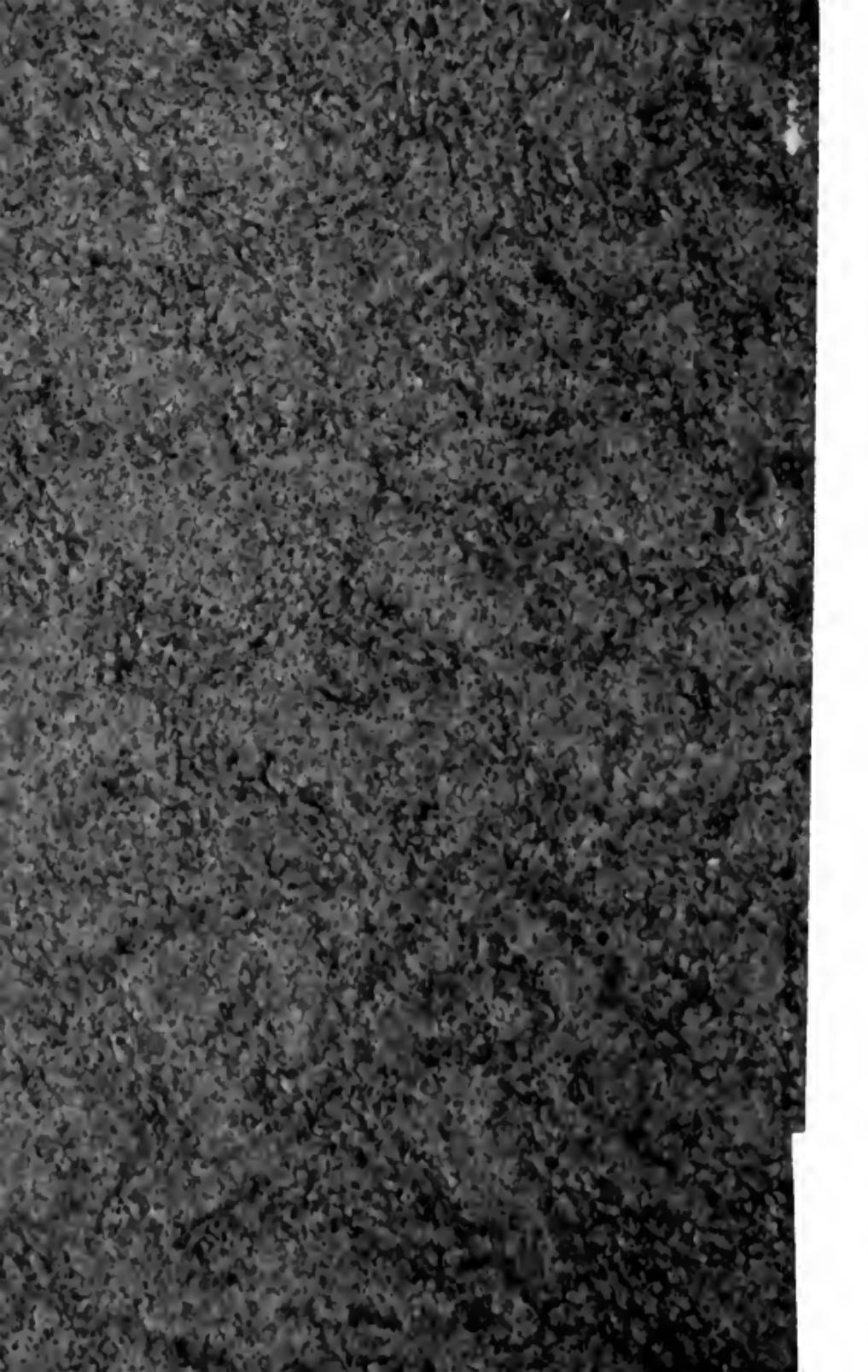
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A Novel.

BY CHARLES READE,

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"LIFTED HIM UP, FOR ONE MOMENT, AND SHOWED HIM THE FACE OF TALEN AP RIOU."
[See *Page 65*.]

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THE JILT.—A YARN.

PART I.

IT was a summer afternoon; the sun shone mellow upon the south sands of Tenby; the clear blue water sparkled to the horizon, and each ripple, as it came ashore, broke into diamonds. This amber sand, broad, bold, and smooth as the turf at Lord's—and, indeed, wickets are often pitched on it—has been called “Nature's finest promenade;” yet, owing to the attraction of a flower show, it was now paraded by a single figure—a tall, straight, well-built young man, rather ruddy, but tanned and bronzed by weather; shaved smooth as an egg, and his collar, his tie, and all his dress very neat and precise. He held a deck glass, and turned every ten yards, though he had a mile to promenade. These signs denoted a good seaman. Yet his glass swept the land more than the water, and that is not like a sailor.

This incongruity, however, was soon explained and justified.

There hove in sight a craft as attractive to ev-

ery true tar, from an admiral of the red to the boatswain's mate, as any cutter, schooner, brig, bark, or ship; and bore down on him, with colors flying alow and aloft.

Lieutenant Greaves made all sail toward her, for it was Ellen Ap Rice, the loveliest girl in Wales.

He met her with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, and thanked her warmly for coming. "Indeed you may," said she: "when I promised, I forgot the flower show."

"Dear me," said he, "what a pity! I would not have asked you."

"Oh," said she, "never mind; I shall not break my heart; but it seems so odd you wanting me to come out here, when you are always welcome at our house, and papa so fond of you."

Lieutenant Greaves endeavored to explain. "Why, you see, Miss Ap Rice, I'm expecting my sailing orders down, and before I go, I want—And the sight of the sea gives one courage."

"Not always; it gave me a fit of terror the last time I was on it."

"Ay, but you are not a sailor; it gives *me* courage to say more than I dare in your own house; you so beautiful, so accomplished, so admired, I am afraid you will never consent to throw yourself away upon a seaman."

Ellen arched her brows. "What *are* you saying, Mr. Greaves? Why, it is known all over Tenby that I renounce the military, and have vowed to be a sailor's bride."

By this it seems there were only two learned professions recognized by the young ladies—at Tenby.

"Ay, ay," said Greaves, "an admiral, or that sort of thing."

"Well," said the young lady, "*of course* he would *have* to be an admiral—*eventually*. But they can not be born admirals." At this stage of the conversation she preferred not to look Lieutenant Greaves, R.N., in the face; so she wrote pot-hooks and hangers on the sand, with her parasol, so carefully that you would have sworn they must be words of deepest import.

"From a lieutenant to an admiral is a long way," said Greaves, sadly.

"Yes," said she, archly, "it is as far as from Tenby to Valparaiso, where my cousin Dick sailed to last year—such a handsome fellow!—and there's Cape Horn to weather. But a good deal depends on courage, and perseverance." In uttering this last remark she turned her eye askant a moment, and a flash shot out of it that lighted the sailor's bonfire in a moment. "Oh, Miss Ap Rice, do I understand you? Can I be

so fortunate? If courage, perseverance, and devotion can win you, no other man shall ever—
You must have seen I love you."

"It would be odd if I had not," said Ellen, blushing a little, and smiling slyly. "Why, all Tenby has seen it. You don't hide it under a bushel."

The young man turned red. "Then I deserve a round dozen at the gangway, for being so indecorous."

"No, no," said the young Welshwoman, generously. "Why do I prefer sailors? Because they are so frank and open and artless and brave. Why, Mr. Greaves, don't you be stupid; your open admiration is a compliment to any girl; and I am proud of it, of course," said she, gently.

"God bless you!" cried the young man. "Now I wish we were at home, that I might go down on my knees to you, without making you the town-talk. Sweet, lovely, darling Ellen, will you try and love me?"

"Humph! If I had not a great esteem for you, should I be here?"

"Ay, but I am asking for more," said Greaves: "for your affection, and your promise to wait for me till I am more than a lieutenant. I dare not ask for your hand till I am a post-captain at

least. Ellen, sweet Ellen, may I put this on your dear finger?"

"Why, it is a ring. No. What for?"

"Let me put it on, and then I'll tell you."

"I declare, if he had not got it ready on purpose!" said she, laughing, and was so extremely amused that she quite forgot to resist, and he whipped it on in a trice. It was no sooner on than she pulled a grave face, and demanded an explanation of this singular conduct.

"It means we are engaged," said he, joyfully, and flung his cap into the air a great height, and caught it.

"A trap!" screamed she. "Take it off this instant."

"Must I?" said he, sadly.

"Of course you must." And she crooked her finger instead of straightening it.

"It won't come off," said he, with more cunning than one would have expected.

"No more it will. Well, I must have my finger amputated the moment I get home. But mind, I am not to be caught by such artifices. You must ask papa."

"So I will," cried Greaves, joyfully. Then, upon reflection: "He'll wonder at my impudence."

"Oh no," said Ellen, demurely; "you know he

is mayor of the town, and has the drollest applications made to him at times. Ha! ha!"

"How shall I ever break it to him?" said Greaves. "A lieutenant!"

"Why, a lieutenant is a gentleman; and are you not related to one of the First Lords of the Admiralty?"

"Yes. But he won't put me over the heads of my betters. All that sort of thing is gone by."

"You need not say that. Say you are cousin to the First Lord, and then stop. That is the way to talk to a mayor. La, look at me, telling him what to say—as if I cared. There, now—here comes that tittering-tattling Mrs. Dodsley, and her whole brood of children and nurses. She sha'n't see what I am doing;" and Miss Ap Rice marched swiftly into Merlin's Cave, settled her skirts, and sat down on a stone. "Oh!" said she, with no great appearance of agitation, "what a goose I must be! This is the last place I ought to have come to; this is where the lovers interchange their vows—the silly things."

This artless speech—if artless it was—brought the man on his knees to her with such an outburst of honest passion and eloquent love that her cooler nature was moved as it had never been before. She was half frightened, but flattered and touched: she shed a tear or two, and, though she



"BROUGHT THE MAN ON HIS KNEES TO HER."



drew away the hand he was mumbling, and said he oughtn't, and he mustn't, there was nothing very discouraging in her way, not even when she stopped her ears and said, "You should say all this to papa." As if one could make as hot love to the mayor in his study as to the mayor's daughter in Merlin's Cave.

She was coy, and would not stay long in Merlin's Cave after this, but said nothing about going home; so they emerged from the cave, and strolled toward Giltar Point.

Suddenly there issued from the Sound, and burst upon their sight, a beautiful yacht, 150 tons or so, cutter-rigged, bowling along before the wind thirteen knots an hour, sails white as snow and well set, hull low and shapely, wire rigging so slim it seemed of whip-cord or mermaids' hair.

"Oh, Arthur!" cried Ellen. "What a beauty!"

"And so she is," said he, heartily. "Bless you for calling me 'Arthur.'"

"It slipped out—by mistake. Come to the Castle Hill. I must see her come right in—Arthur."

Arthur took Ellen's hand, and they hurried to the Castle Hill; and, as they went, kept turning their heads to watch the yacht's manœuvres; for a sailor never tires of observing how this or that craft is handled; and the arrival of a first-class

yacht in those fair but uneventful waters was very exciting to Ellen Ap Rice.

The cutter gave St. Catherine's Rock a wide berth, and ran out well to the Woolhouse Reef; then hauled up and stood on the port tack, heading for her anchorage; but an eddy wind from the North Cliffs caught her, and she broke off; so she stood on toward Monkstone Point; then came about with her berth well under her lee, mistress of the situation, as landsmen say.

Arthur kept explaining her manœuvres and the necessity for them, and, when she came about, said she was well-behaved—had forereached five times her length—and was smartly handled too.

"Oh yes," said Ellen; "a most skillful captain, evidently."

This was too hasty a conclusion for the sober Greaves. "Wait till we see him in a cyclone, with all his canvas on that one stick, or working off a lee shore in a nor'wester. But he can handle a cutter in fair weather and fresh-water, that is certain."

"Fresh-water!" said Ellen. "How dare you? And don't mock people. I can't get enough fresh-water in Tenby to wash my hands."

"What, do you want them *whiter* than snow?" said Greaves, gloating on them undisguised.

"Arthur, behave, and lend me the glass."

"There, dearest."

So then she inspected the vessel, and he inspected the white hand that held the glass. It was a binocular; for even seamen nowadays seldom use the short telescope of other days; what might be called a very powerful opera-glass has taken its place.

"Goodness me!" screamed Ellen. The construction of which sentence is referred to pedagogues.

"What is the matter?"

"The captain is a blackamoor."

Having satisfied herself of the revolting fact by continued inspection, she handed the glass to Greaves. "See if he isn't," said she.

Greaves looked through the glass, and took leave to contradict her. "Blackamoor! not he. It is worse. It is a gentleman—that ought to know better—with a beastly black beard right down to his waistband."

"Oh, Arthur, how horrid! and in such a pretty ship!"

Greaves smiled indulgently at her calling a cutter a "ship;" but her blunders were beauties, he was so in love with her.

She took the glass again, and looked and talked at the same time. "I wonder what has brought him in here?"

"To look for a barber, I should hope."

"Arthur—suppose we were to send out the new hair-dresser to him? Would it not be fun? Oh!—oh!—oh!"

"What is it now?"

"A boat going out to him. Well, I declare—a boatful of dignitaries."

"Mercy on us!"

"Yes; I see papa, and I see the secretary of the Cambrian Club, and another gentleman—a deputation, I do believe. No—how stupid I am! Why, the new arrival must be Mr. Laxton, that wrote and told papa he was coming; he is the son of an old friend, a ship-builder. Papa is sure to ask him to dinner; and *I* ask *you*. Do come. He will be quite a lion."

"I am very unfortunate. Can't possibly come to-day. Got to dine on board the *Warrior*, and meet the Prince; name down; no getting off."

"Oh, what a pity! It would have been so nice; you and Captain Laxton together."

"Captain Laxton? Who is he?"

"Why, the gentleman with the beard."

"Hang it all, don't call him a captain."

"Not when he has a ship of his own?"

"So has a collier, and the master of a fishing lugger. Besides, these swells are only fair-weather skippers; there's always a sailing-master aboard

their vessels that takes the command if it blows a capful of wind."

"Indeed! then I despise them. But I am sorry *you* can't come, Arthur."

"Are you really, love?"

"You know I am."

"Then that is all I care for. A dandy yachtsman is no lion to me."

"We ought to go home now," said Ellen, "or we shall not have time to dress."

He had not only to dress, but to drive ten miles; yet he went with her to her very door. He put the time to profit; he got her to promise every thing short of marrying him without papa's consent, and, as she was her father's darling, and in reality ruled him, not he her, that obstacle did not seem insurmountable.

That evening the master of the yacht dined at the mayor's, and was the lion of the evening. His face was rather handsome, what one could see of it, and his beard manly. He had travelled and cruised for years, and kept his eyes and ears open; had a great flow of words, quite a turn for narrative, a ready wit, a seductive voice, and an infectious laugh. His only drawback was a restless eye. Even that he put to a good use by being attentive to every body in turn. He was ev-

idently charmed with Ellen Ap Rice, but showed it in a well-bred way, and did not alarm her. She was a lovely girl, and accustomed to be openly admired.

Next day Arthur called on her, and she told him every thing, and seemed sorry to have had any pleasure he had not a share in. "He made himself wonderfully agreeable," said she, "especially to papa; and, oh! if you had seen how his beard wagged when he laughed—ha! ha! And, what do you think, the 'Cambrians' have lost no time; they have shot him flying, invited him to their Bachelors' Ball. Ah, Arthur, the first time you and I ever danc'd together was at that ball, a year ago. I wonder whether you remember? Well, he asked me for the first round danc'e."

"Confound his impudence! What did you say?"

"I said 'No'; I was engaged to the Royal Navy."

"Dear girl. And that shut him up, I hope."

"Dear me, no. He is too good-humored to be cross because a strange girl was bespoke before he came; he just laughed, and asked might he follow in its wake."

"And you said 'Yes.'"

"No, I did not, now. And you need not look so cross, for there would have been no harm if I had; but what I did say was not 'yes,' but 'hum,'

and I would consult my memoranda. Never you mind who I dance with, Mr. Arthur; their name is legion. Wait till you catch me parading the sands with the creatures, and catching cold with them in Merlin's Cave."

"My own love. Come on the sands now; it is low water, and a glorious day."

"You dear goose!" said Ellen. "What, ask a lady out when it is only one clear day before a ball? Why, I am invisible to every creature but you at this moment, and even you can only stay till she comes."

"She? Who?"

"Why, the dress-maker, to be sure. Talk of the—dress-maker, and there's her knock."

"Must I go this moment?"

"Oh no. *Let them open the door to her first.* But of course it is no use your staying while she is here. We shall be hours and hours making up our minds. Besides, we shall be up stairs, trying on things. Arthur, don't look so. Why, the ball will be here with awful rapidity; and I'll dance with you three times out of four; I'll dance you down on the floor, my sailor bold. I never knew a Welsh girl yet couldn't dance an Englishman into a cocked hat: now that's *vulgar*."

"Not as you speak it, love. Whatever comes from your lips is Poetry. I wish you could dance

me into a cocked hat and two epaulets; for it is not in nature nor reason you should ever marry a lieutenant."

"It will be his fault if I don't, then."

The door was rattled discreetly, and then opened, by old Dewar, butler, footman, and chatterbox of the establishment. "The dress-maker, miss."

"Well, let Agnes take her up stairs."

"Yes, miss."

Greaves thought it was mere selfishness to stay any longer now; so he bade her good-by.

But she would not let him go away sad. She tried to console him. "Surely," said she, "you would wish me to look well in public. It is *the* ball of Tenby. I want you to be proud of your prize, and not find you have captured a dowdy."

The woman of society and her reasons failed to comfort Lieutenant Greaves; so then, as she was not a girl to accept defeat, she tried the woman of nature: she came nearer him, and said, earnestly, "Only one day, Arthur! Spare me the pain of seeing you look unhappy." In saying this, very tenderly, she laid her hand softly on his arm, and turned her lovely face and two beautiful eyes full up to him.

A sweet inarticulate sound ensued, and he *did* spare her the pain of seeing him look unhappy;

for he went off flushed and with very sparkling eyes.

Surely female logic has been underrated up to the date of this writing.

Greaves went away, the happiest lieutenant in the Royal Navy, and content to kill time till the ball day. He dined at the club ; smoked a cigar on the Castle Hill, and entered his lodgings just as the London day mail was delivered. There was a paper parallelogram for him, with a seal as big as the face of a chronometer. Order from the Admiralty to join the *Redoubtable* at Portsmouth—for disposal. Private note, by the secretary, advising him to lose no time, as he might be appointed flag-lieutenant to the *Centaur*, admiral's ship on the China station, from which quick promotion was sure to follow in the ordinary course of the service.

Before he knew Ellen Ap Rice his heart would have bounded with exultation at this bright prospect ; but now that heart seemed cut in two ; one half glowed with ambition, the other sickened at the very thought of leaving Ellen, half won. But those who serve the nation may doubt and fear, but have parted with the right to vacillate. There was but one thing to do—start for London by the fast train next morning at 10 A.M.

He sent a hurried note to Ellen, by messenger,

telling her what had occurred, and imploring an interview. His messenger brought him back a prompt reply. Papa was going to Cardiff in the morning on business; would breakfast at half past eight precisely. He must invite himself to breakfast that night, and come at eight.

He did so, and Ellen came down directly, with the tear in her eye. They comforted each other, agreed to look on it as a sure step to a creditable union, and, meantime, lessen the separation by a quick fire of letters. He would write from every port he landed in, and would have a letter for every homeward-bound ship they brought to out at sea, and she would greet him with a letter at every port.

When they had duly sealed this compact, the mayor came in, and that kept them both within bounds.

But Greaves's prospect of promotion was discussed, and the mayor showed a paternal interest, and said, "Come back to Tenby a captain, and we shall all be proud of you, shall we not, Nelly?"

When a father says so much as that to a young fellow who has been openly courting his daughter, it hardly bears two meanings; and Greaves went away, brave and buoyant, and the sting taken out of the inopportune parting.

He was soon at Portsmouth, and aboard the *Redoubtable*.

He was appointed flag-lieutenant on board the *Centaur*, then lying at Spithead, bound on a two years' voyage. Under peculiar circumstances she was to touch at Lisbon, Madeira, and the Cape; but her destination was Hong-Kong, where she was to lie for some time in command of the station.

Next morning a letter from Ellen; he kissed it devotedly before he opened it. After some kind things, that were balm to him, she seemed to gravitate toward that great event in a girl's life, the ball: "I did so miss you, dear; and that impudent Mr. Laxton had the first dance—for of course I never thought of putting any body in your place—but he would not give up the second any more for that. He said I had promised. Oh, and he asked me if I would honor his yacht with my presence, and he would take me a cruise round Sunday Island. I said, 'No; I was a bad sailor.' 'Oh,' said he, 'we will wait for a soldier's wind.' What is a 'soldier's wind?' When I would not consent, he got papa by himself, and papa consented directly for both of us. I can not bear such impudent men that will not take a 'no.'"

Arthur wrote back very affectionately, but made a point of her not sailing in Laxton's yacht. It was not proper; nor prudent. The wind might

fall ; the yacht be out all night ; and, in any case, the man was a stranger, of whom they knew nothing, but that his appearance was wild and disreputable, and that he was a mere cruiser and a man of pleasure. He hoped his Ellen would make this little sacrifice to his feelings. This was his one remonstrance.

Ellen replied to it : " You dear, jealous goose, did you think I would go on board his yacht the only lady ? Of course there was a large party ; and you should have seen the Miss Frumps, and that Agnes Barker, how they flung themselves at his head ; it was disgusting. But don't you worry about the man, dear. I am sorry I told you. We were back to dinner."

Then the fair writer went off to other things ; but there was a postscript :

" Captain Laxton has called to bid good-by, and his beautiful yacht is just sailing out of the roads."

As what little interest there is in this part of the story centres in Miss Ap Rice's letters, I will just say that Greaves had one from her at Lisbon which gave him unmixed pleasure. It was long and kind, though not so gay as usual. As for this Laxton, he appeared to have faded out entirely, for she never mentioned his name.

At Madeira Greaves received a letter shorter and more sprightly. In a postscript she said: "Who do you think has fallen down from the clouds? That Mr. Laxton, without his yacht. We asked him what had become of her. 'Condemned,' said he, solemnly. 'In the Levant, a Greek brig outsailed her; in the Channel here, a French lugger lay nearer the wind. After that, no more cutters for me.' We think he is a little cracked. That odious Agnes Barker will not let him alone. I never saw such a shameless flirt."

The ship lay eight days at Madeira, and on the seventh day he received another letter, begging him to come home as soon as possible, for she was subject to downright persecution from Captain Laxton; and her father was much too easy. For the first time in her life she really felt the need of a protector.

This letter set Greaves almost wild. She wanted him back to protect her now, and he bound for the East, and could not hope to see her for two years.

Nothing for it but to pace the deck and rage internally. No fresh advices possible before the Cape. He couldn't sleep, and this operated curiously: he passed for a supernaturally vigilant lieutenant.

There was a commander on board, a sprig of

nobility, a charming fellow, but rather an easy-going officer; he used to wonder at Greaves, and, having the admiral's ear, praised him for a model. "The beggar never sleeps at all," said he. "I think he will kill himself."

"He will be the only one of ye," growled the admiral. But he took notice of Greaves—all the more that a Lord of the Admiralty, who was his personal friend, had said a word for him in one of those meek postscripts which mean so much when written by the hand of power.

At last they reached the Cape, and dropped anchor.

The mail-boat came out with letters.

There was none for Greaves.

No letter at all! The deek seemed to rise under him, and he had to hold on by the forebraces; and even that was as much as he could do, being somewhat weakened by sleepless nights. Several officers came round him, and the ship's surgeon applied salts and brandy, and he recovered, but looked very wild. Then the surgeon advised him to go ashore for a change. Leave was granted immediately, and the second lieutenant went with him good-naturedly enough. They made inquiries, and found another mail was due in two days. They took up their quarters at a hotel, and there Greaves was so wretched, and his companion so

sympathetic, that at last the tormented lover made a confidant of him.

"Oh, it will be all right," said the other. "Why should she want you home, if she liked that lubber?"

"I don't know," said poor Greaves. "The last letter was not like her—such a high-spirited girl; and it looked as if he was getting her into his power. If he has, all the worse for both of us; for the day I catch him I shall kill him."

Next day the mail came in; and as Greaves had left his address at the post-office, a letter was brought him, all wetted and swollen with rain, the boy having carried it without the least attempt to protect it from a thick drizzle that enveloped the town that day.

Greaves tore it open. It was fatally short. This is every syllable of it:

"Forget one unworthy of you. I can resist no longer. I am fascinated. I am his slave, and must follow him round the world. Perhaps he will revenge you.

"Dear Arthur, I did not mean to deceive. I am but young; I thought I loved you as you deserve. Pray, pray forgive me. E."

Suspense, the worst of all our tortures, was

over; the blow had fallen. Arthur Greaves was a man again.

"Yes, I forgive you, my poor girl," he groaned. "But" (with sudden fury) "I'll kill *him*."

He told his friend it was all over, and even gave him the letter. "It is not her fault," he sobbed. "The fellow has cast a spell over her. No more about it, or I should soon go mad."

And, from that hour, he endured in silence, and checked all return to the subject very sternly.

But his friend talked, and told the other officers how Greaves had been jilted, and was breaking his heart; and he looked so ghastly pale that altogether he met with much honest sympathy. The very admiral was sorry, in his way. He had met him in the street, looking like a ghost, and his uniform hanging loose on him, his stalwart form was so shrunk. "Confound the women!" growled the old boy to his favorite, the commander. "There's the best officer in the ship, a first-class mathematician, an able navigator, a good seaman, and a practical gunner, laid low by some young bitch not worth his little finger, I'll be bound."

Next day he sent for the young man.

"Lettenant Greaves?"

"Sir."

"Here's a transport going home, and nobody to command her. They have come to me. I

thought of sending the second lettenant ; it would have been more convenient ; for, by Jove ! Sir, when you are gone, I may have to sail the ship myself. However, I have altered my mind—you will take the troops to Plymouth."

"Yes, admiral."

"Then you'd better take a fortnight ashore, for your health. You are very ill, Sir."

"Thank you, admiral."

"Come out to Hong-Kong how you can. You can apply to the Admiralty for your expenses, *if you think it is any use.*"

Greaves's eye flashed and his pale cheek coloured.

"Ay, ay," said the admiral, "I see these instructions are not so disagreeable as they ought to be. A steam-tug and a cargo of lobsters ! But you must listen to me : an honest sailor like you is no match for these girls ; it is not worth your while to be sick or sorry for any one of them. There ! there ! send your traps aboard the tub, and clear the harbor of her as soon as you can. She is under your orders, Sir."

"God bless you, admiral !" sobbed Greaves, and etired all in a hurry, partly to hide his emotions, and partly because it is not usual, in the service, to bless one's superiors to their faces. It is more the etiquette to curse them behind their backs.

Now was Greaves a new man. Light shone in his eye, vigor returned to his limbs; this most unexpected stroke of good fortune put another face on things. He had the steamboat coaled and victualed with unheard-of expedition, got the troops on board, and steamed away for Plymouth.

They had fair weather, and his hopes rose. After all, Ellen could hardly have taken any irretrievable step. She had never denied his claim on her; a good licking bestowed on Laxton might break the spell, and cool his ardor into the bargain. He felt sure he could win her back somehow. He had been out of sight when this fellow succeeded in deluding her. But now he should get fair play.

He landed the troops at Plymouth, and made his report; then off to Tenby at once. He went straight to the mayor's house. A girl opened the door.

“Miss Ap Rice?”

“She don't live here, Sir, now. Lawk! it is Captain Greaves. Come in, Sir, and I'll send Mr. Dewar.”

Greaves went in, full of misgivings, and sat down in the dining-room.

Presently Dewar came—a white-haired old fellow, who had been at sea in early life, but was

now the mayor's factotum, and allowed himself great liberties.

He came in, open-mouthed. "Ah, Captain Greaves, it is a bad business. I'm a'most sorry to see you here. Gone, Sir, gone, and we shall never see her again, I'm afraid."

"Gone! What! run away—with that scoundrel?"

"Well, Sir, it did look like running away, being so sudden. But it was a magnificent wedding, for that matter, and they left in a special steamer, with a gilt stern, and the flags of all nations a-flying."

"Married?"

"You may well be surprised, Sir. But, for as sudden as it was, I seen it a-coming. You see, Sir, he was always at her, morning, noon, and night. He'd have tired out a saint, leastways a female one. Carriage and four to take her to some blessed old ruin or other. *She* didn't care for the ruin, but she couldn't withstand the four horses, which they are seldom seen in Tenby. Flowers every day; Hindia shawls; dimond necklace; a wheedling tongue; and a beard like a Christmas fir. I blame that there beard for it. Ye see, captain, these young ladies never speaks their real minds about them beards. Lying comes natural to them; and so, to flatter a clean, re-

spectable body like you or me, they makes pretend, and calls beards ojious. And so they are. That there Laxton, his beard supped my soup for a wager agin his belly; and with him chattering so, he'd forget to wipe it for ever so long. Sarved him right if I'd brought him a basin and a towel before all the company. But these young ladies, they don't vally that. What they looks for in a man is to be the hopposite of a woman. They hates and despises their own sect. So what they loves in a man is hunblushing himpudence and a long beard. The more they complains of a man's brass, the more they likes it; and as for a beard, they'd have him look like a beast, so as he looked very onlike a woman, which a beard it is. But if they oncee fingers one of them beards, it is all up with 'em. And that is how I knew what was coming; for one day I was at my pantry window, a-cleaning my silver, when miss and him was in the little garden; seated on one bench they was, and not fur off one another neither. He was a-reading poetry to her, and his head so near her that I'm blest if his tarnation beard wasn't almost in her lap. Her eyes was turned up to heaven in a kind of trance, a-tasting of the poetry; but whiles she was a-looking up to heaven for the meaning of that there sing-song, blest if her little white fingers wasn't twisting the ends

of that there beard into little ringlets, without seeming to know what they was doing. Soon as I saw that, I said, 'Here's a go. It is all up with Captain Greaves. He have limed her, this here cockney sailor.' For if ever a woman plays with a man'scurls, or his whiskers, or his beard, she is netted like a partridge. It is a sure sign. So should we be if the women's hair was loose; but they has so much mercy as to tie it up, and make it as hugly as they can, and full o' pins, and that saves many a man from being netted and caged and all. So soon arter that she named the day."

Greaves sat dead silent under this flow of envenomed twaddle, like a Spartan under the knife. But at last he could bear it no longer. He groaned aloud, and buried his contorted face in his hands.

"Confound my chattering tongue!" said honest Dewar, and ran to the sideboard and forced a glass of brandy on him. He thanked him, and drank it, and told him not to mind him, but to tell him where she was settled with the fellow.

"Settled, Sir?" said Dewar. "No such luck. She writes to her papa every week, but it is always from some fresh place. 'Dewar,' says his worship to me, 'I've married my girl to the Wandering Jew.' Oh, he don't hide his mind from me. He tells me that this Laxton have had a

ship built in the north, a thundering big ship—for he's as rich as Crœses—and he have launched her to sail round the world. My fear is he will sail her to the bottom of the ocean."

"Poor Ellen!"

"Captain, captain, don't fret your heart out for her; she is all right. She loves the man, and she loves hexcitement; which he will give it her. She'd have had a ball here every week if she could; and now she will see a new port every week. She is all right. Let her go her own road. She broke her troth to do it; and we don't think much, in Wales, of girls as do that, be they gentle or be they simple, look you."

Greaves looked up, and said, sternly, "Not one word against her before me. I have borne all I can."

Old Dewar wasn't a bit offended. "Ah, you are a man, you are," said he. Then, in a cordial way, "Captain Greaves, Sir, you will stay with us, now you are come."

"Me stay here!"

"Ay; why not? Ye mustn't bear spite against the old man. He stood out for you longer than I ever knowed him to stand out against *her*. But she could always talk him over; she could talk any body over. It is all haecident my standing so true to you. It wasn't worth her while to talk

old Dewar over ; that is the reason. Do ye stay, now. You'll be like a son to the old man, look you. He is sadly changed since she went—quite melancholy, and keeps a-blaming of hisself for letting her be master."

"Dewar," said the young man, "I can not. The sight of the places where I walked with her, and loved her, and she seemed to love me—oh no!—to London by the first train, and then to sea. Thank God for the sea ! The sea can not change into lying land. My heart has been broken ashore. Perhaps it may recover in a few years, at sea. Give him my love, Dewar, and God bless *you* !

He almost ran out of the house, and fixed his eyes on the ground, to see no more objects imbibited by recollections of happiness fled. He made his way to his uncle in London, reported himself to the Admiralty, and asked for a berth in the first ship bound to China. He was told, in reply, he could go out in any merchant ship ; but as his pay would not be interrupted, the government could not be chargeable for his expenses.

In spite of a dizzy headache, he went into the City next day to arrange for his voyage.

But at night he was taken with violent shivering, and before morning was light-headed.

A doctor was sent for in the morning.

Next day the case was so serious that a second was called in.

The case declared itself—gastric fever and jaundice.

They administered medicines, which, as usual in these cases, did the stomach a little harm, and the system no good.

His uncle sent for a third physician; a rough but very able man. He approved all the others had done—and did the very reverse; ordered him a milk diet, tepid aspersions, frequent change of bed and linen, and no medicine at all, but a little bark; and old Scotch whiskey in moderation.

“Tell me the truth,” said his sorrowful uncle.

“I always do,” said the doctor, “that is why they call me a brute. Well, Sir, the case is not hopeless *yet*. But I will not deceive you; I fear he is going a longer voyage than China.”

So may the mind destroy the body, and the Samson, who can conquer a host, be laid low by a woman.

PART II.

YOUTH, a good constitution, good nursing, the right food and drink, and no medicine, saved the life of Arthur Greaves. But gastric fever and jaundice are terrible foes to attack a man in concert ; they left him as unlike the tanned and ruddy seaman of our first scene, as the wrecked ship battered against the shore is to the same vessel when she breasted the waves under canvas. His hair was but half an inch long, his grizzly beard two inches ; and his sunken cheeks as yellow as saffron. They told him he was out of danger, and offered him a barber to shave his chin—the same that had shaved his head a fortnight before.

“No,” said the convalescent ; “not such a fool.”

He explained to his uncle, in private : “I have lost my Ellen for want of a beard. I won’t lose another that way, if I ever have one.”

He turned his now benumbed heart toward his profession, and pined for blue water. His physician approved ; and so, though still weakish and yellowish, he shipped, as passenger, in the *Phœbe*, bound for Bombay and China, and went on board

at Gravesend. She was registered nine hundred tons, and carried out a mixed cargo of hardware and Manchester goods, including flaming cottons got up only for the East, where Englishmen admire them for their Oriental color. She was well manned at starting, and ably commanded from first to last by Captain Curtis and six officers. The first mate, Mr. Lewis, was a very experienced seaman, and quite a friendship sprang up between him and Flag-Lieutenant Greaves. The second mate, Castor, was an amiable dare-devil, but had much to learn in navigation, though in mere seamanship he was well enough. Fortunately he knew his deficiencies, and was teachable.

A prosperous voyage is an uneventful one; and there never was a more humdrum voyage than the *Phœbe's* from Gravesend to Bombay. She was towed from Gravesend to Deal, where an easterly wind sprang up, and, increasing, carried her past the "Lizard," and out of sight of land; soon after that the wind veered a point or two to the northward. She sighted Madeira on the seventh day, and got the N.E. Trades; they carried her two degrees north of the line. Between that and 2 S. she fell into the Doldrums. But she got the S.E. Trade sooner than usual, and made the best of it; set the foretop-mast studding-sail, and went a little out of her course. At 34 S. she got into

the steady nor'wester, and, in due course, anchored in Table Bay.

The diamond fever being at its height, several hands deserted her at the Cape. But she had fair weather, and reached Bombay without any incident worth recording. By this time Greaves had put on flesh and color, and though his heart had a scar that often smarted, it bled no longer; and as to his appearance, he was himself again, all but a long and very handsome beard:

At Bombay the *Phœbe* landed part of her cargo, and all her passengers; but took a few fresh ones on board for China—a Portuguese merchant bound for Macao, and four ladies, two of them officers' wives returning to their husbands, and two spinsters going out to join their relatives at Hong-Kong. They were all more or less pretty and intelligent, and brightened the ship amazingly; yet one day every man in her wished, with all his soul, every one of those ladies was out of her. She also shipped forty Lascars, to make up for twenty white men she had lost by death and desertion.

The *Phœbe* had fair weather to Penang, and for some time after, but not enough of it. However, after the usual bother in the Straits of Malacca, he got clear, and carried a light breeze with her. Captain Curtis feared it would be down sun, down

wind; but the breeze held through the first and greater part of the second watch; and then, sure enough, it fell dead calm.

Mr. Lewis had the morning watch; the ropes were coiled up at one bell, the whip rigged, the deck wetted and sanded, and they were holy-stoning it when day began to break. Then there loomed the black outline of a strange sail lying on the *Phœbe*'s port beam, a quarter of a mile off. The sun soon gets his full power in that latitude, and in a minute the vessel burst out quite clear, a topsail schooner of some four hundred tons, with a long snaky hull, taunt, raking masts, and black mast-heads, every thing very trig a low and aloft, sails extremely white; she carried five guns of large calibre on each side.

Lewis reported her to the captain directly, and he came on deck. They both examined her with their glasses. She puzzled them.

“What do you make of her, Lewis? Looks like a Yankee.”

“So I thought, Sir, till I saw her armament.”

Here Greaves joined them, and the captain turned toward him. “Can she be one of your China squadron?”

“Hardly, unless the admiral has a schooner for his tender; and, if so, she would be under a pennant.”

Lewis suggested she might be a Portuguese schooner looking out for pirates.

Captain Curtis said she might, and he should like to know; so he ordered the driver to be brailed up, and the ship's colors hoisted.

The next moment it was eight bells, and pipe to breakfast. But Captain Curtis and his companions remained on deck to see the stranger hoist her colors in reply.

The schooner did not show a rag of bunting. She sat the water, black, grim, snake-like, silent.

Her very crew were invisible; yet one glance at her rigging had showed the officers of the *Phœbe* she was well manned.

Captain Curtis had his breakfast brought him on deck.

The vessels drifted nearer each other, as often happens in a dead calm. So, at 8.50 A.M., Captain Curtis took a trumpet, and hailed the stranger, "*Schooner—ahoy!*"

No answer.

The *Phœbe*'s men tumbled up, and clustered on the forecastle and hung over the bulwarks; for nothing is more exciting to a ship's company than hailing another vessel at sea.

Yet not one of the schooner's crew appeared.

This was strange, unnatural, and even alarming.

The captain, after waiting some time, repeated his hail still louder.

This time a single figure showed on board the schooner; a dark, burly fellow, with a straight mustache, a little tuft on his chin, and wearing a Persian fez. He stood by the foremast swiftsure of the main rigging, and bawled through his trumpet, "Hullo!"

"What schooner is that?"

"What ship is that?"

"The *Phæbe*."

"Where from, and where bound?"

"Penang to Hong-Kong. Who are *you*?"

"The *Black Rover*."

"Where bound?"

"Nowhere. Cruising."

"Why don't—ye—show—your colors?"

"Ha!—ha!"

As this strange laugh rang through the trumpet across the strip of water that now parted the two vessels, the Mephistophelian figure dived below, and the schooner was once more deserted, to all appearance.

It was curious to see how Captain Curtis and his first mate now evaded their own suspicions, and were ingenious in favorable surmises. Might she not be an armed slaver? or, as Lewis had suggested, a Portuguese?

"That fellow who answered the hail had the cut of a Portuguese."

But here Mr. Castor put in his word. "If she is looking for pirates, she hasn't far to go for one, I'm thinking," said that hare-brained young man.

"Nonsense, Sir," said the captain. "What do you know about pirates? Did ye ever see one as near as this?"

"No, Sir."

"No more did I," said Greaves.

"*You!*" said Castor. "Not likely. When they see a Queen's ship they are all wings, and no beak. But they can range up alongside a poor devil of a merchantman. Not seen a pirate? no; they are rare birds now; but I have seen ships of burden and ships of war, and this is neither. She is low in the water, yet she carries no freight, for she floats like a cork. She is armed and well manned, yet no crew to be seen. The devils are under hatches, till the time comes. If she isn't a pirate, what is she? However, I'll soon know."

"Don't talk so wild, Castor," said the captain: "and how can you know? they won't answer straight, and they won't show their colors."

"Oh, there's a simple way you have not thought of," said the sapient Castor: "and I'll take that way, if you will allow me—I'LL BOARD HER."

At this characteristic proposal, made with perfect composure, the others looked at him with a certain ironical admiration.

"Board her!" said the captain. "I'll be d——d if you do."

"Why not, captain? There, that shows you think she is wicked. Why, we *must* find out what she is—somehow."

"We shall know soon enough," said the captain, gloomily. "I am not going to risk my officers; if any body boards her, it shall be me."

"Oh, that is the game, is it?" said Castor, reproachfully. "Why, captain, you are a married man. You ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"No more words, Sir, if you please," said the captain, sternly. "Step forward and give the order to sling a butt, and get a boat ready for target practice. I shall exercise the guns, being a calm. Perhaps he thinks we are weaker than we are."

As soon as Castor's back was turned, he altered his tone, and said, with much feeling, "I know that fool-hardy young man's mother. How could I look her in the face if I let him board that devil before we know her intentions?"

A butt was ballasted with sand, so as to secure its floating steadily, bung-hole up; the bung was

removed, and a boat-hook wedged in, bearing the ensign. The butt was then launched, and towed out half a mile to starboard ; and the *Phœbe* tried her guns on it.

If she had anticipated this meeting, the ship could have poured a formidable broadside into the mysterious stranger, for she carried three 32-pound carronades of a side on her quarter-deck, and thirteen 18-pounders of a side on her gun-deck. But it was the old story; the times were peaceable, the men were berthed on the gun-deck, and, for their convenience, eighteen out of the twenty-six guns had been struck down into the hold.

With the remaining guns on the starboard side they fired at the butt, and so carefully that, after an hour's practice, it was brought back very little the worse. The only telling shot was made on the gun-deck by a gunner, whose foot slipped somehow, and he dropped a 32-pound ball on Reaves's ankle, disabling that unfortunate officer: he was carried to his cabin in great pain, and there attended by the surgeon.

The commotion caused by this misfortune was hardly over upon the quarter-deck when an unexpected incident occurred—an act of direct insubordination. Mr. Castor had put on his uniform, and persuaded two poor fellows, an ignorant Las-

car and a reckless Briton like himself, to go out to the schooner in the boat. They slipped into her as soon as the party came on board with the butt, and at first pretended to be baling her out and examining her for leaks; but they worked quietly alongside till they got under the ship's bows, and then dropped their oars gently into the water, and pulled for the schooner like mad.

They were a third of the way before Captain Curtis caught sight of them. He roared to them to come back, and threatened to put them in irons. But none are so deaf as those who won't hear; and he did not use his trumpet, lest the enemy should think they were disunited on board the ship.

He and Lewis, therefore, now looked on in silence, and literally perspired with anxiety for the fate of Castor and his boat's crew; and although their immediate anxiety was as unselfish as it was keen, yet they were also conscious that if Castor lost his life in this rash enterprise, that would prove the commander of the schooner felt strong enough to attack *them*—no quarter on either side—and intended to do it.

At this terrible moment, when their eyes were strained to observe every movement in the schooner, and their nerves strung up like violin strings, female voices broke gayly in upon them with in-

nocent chatter that, for once, jarred as badly as screams ; the lady passengers had kept very snug during the firing, but finding it was quite over, burst on the deck in a body.

FIRST LADY. "Oh, that's the ship we have been saluting."

SECOND LADY. "A royal salute."

THIRD LADY. "Is it the Duke of Edinburgh's ship, captain?"

No answer.

THIRD LADY. "What a beauty!"

FIRST LADY. "Why does she not salute us back, captain?"

CAPTAIN. "Got no guns, perhaps."

FIRST LADY. "Oh yes, she has. Those black things peeping out are guns."

SECOND LADY. "Ah, there's one of our boats going to call on her."

THIRD LADY. "Oh, captain, may we go on board of her?"

CAPTAIN. "No, ma'am."

THIRD LADY. "Oh dear! Why not?"

CAPTAIN. "That is my business."

The fair speaker tossed her head and said, "Well, I am sure!" but she drew back with red cheeks, and the tears in her eyes, at being snubbed so suddenly and unreasonably: the other ladies gathered round her, and the words, "Cross old

thing!" were heard to issue from the party, but fell unheeded, for neither the captain nor Mr. Lewis had eyes nor ears except for the schooner and the boat. As the latter neared the ship, several faces peeped, for a moment, at the port-holes of the schooner.

Yet, when the boat ran alongside the schooner amid-ships, there was no respect shown to Castor's uniform, nor, indeed, common civility: it would have been no more than the right thing to pipe the side; but there were no sidesmen at all, nor even a side-rope.

Observing this, Captain Curtis shook his head very gravely.

But the dare-devil Castor climbed the schooner's side like a cat, and boarded her in a moment, then gave his men an order, and disappeared. The men pulled rapidly away from the schooner; and a snarl of contempt and horror broke from Curtis and his first mate. They seemed to be abandoning their imprudent but gallant officer.

They pulled about a hundred yards, and then rested on their oars, and waited.

Then every sailor on board the *Phœbe* saw instinctively that Castor felt his danger, and had declined to risk any life but his own. He must have ordered the men to lie to a certain time, then give him up for lost, and return in safety to the

ship. This trait and his daring made Castor, in one single moment, the darling of the whole ship's company.

The ladies were requested to go below, on some pretense or other; and the ship was cleared for action as far as possible.

Meantime words can hardly describe the racking suspense that was endured by the officers, and, in a great degree, by the crew of the *Phœbe*. The whole living heart of that wooden structure throbbed for one man.

Five minutes passed—ten—twenty—thirty—yet he did not re-appear.

Apprehension succeeded to doubt, and despair to apprehension.

At last they gave him up, and the burning desire for vengeance mingled with their fears for their own safety. So strong was this feeling that the next event, the pirate's attack upon that ill-fated officer's ship, was no longer regarded with unmixed dread. The thirst for vengeance mingled with it.

At ten o'clock A.M. the strained eyes on board the *Phœbe* saw two sidesmen appear amid-ships, and fix scarlet side-ropes.

Then came an officer and hailed Castor's boat. The men pulled to the schooner. Then Castor appeared, and went down by the ropes into the

boat; he and the officer touched hats. Castor sat down in the stern-sheets, and the men gave way.

The ship's company cheered, the side was piped, and the insubordinate officer received on board with all the honors. Caps were waved, eyes glistened, and eager hands extended to him; but he himself did not seem so very exultant. He was pleased with his reception, however, and said, in his quaint way, "This is jolly. I am not to be put in irons, then."

The captain drew him apart. "Well, what is she?"

"Don't know."

"Why, what do you mean? You have been near an hour aboard her."

"But I am none the wiser. Captain, I wish you would have us all into your cabin, and then I'll tell you a rum story; perhaps you will understand it among you, for you know my head-piece isn't A1."

This advice was taken directly, and Castor related his adventures, in full conclave, with closed doors.

MR. CASTOR'S NARRATIVE.

"The beggar did not hang out so much as a rope to me. I boarded his hooker the same way I should like to board her again with thirty good

cutlasses at my back ; and I ordered the boat to lie out of harm's way for an hour.

“ Well, I soon found myself on her quarter-deck, under the awning. By George, Sir, it was alive with men, as busy as bees, making their little preparations, drat 'em. Some were oiling the locks of the guns, some were cleaning small-arms, some were grinding cutlasses. They took no notice of me ; and I stood there looking like an ass.

“ I wondered whether they took me for a new officer just joined ; but that was not likely. However, I wasn't going to notice *them*, as they hadn't the manners to notice me. So there I stood and watched them. And I had just taken out my vesuvians to light a cigar, when a middle-aged man, in a uniform I don't know, but the metal of it was silver, came bustling up, touched his cap to the deck, and brushed past me as if I was invisible ; so I hung on to his coat tails, and brought him to under all his canvas.”

This set the youngest mate giggling, but he was promptly frowned down.

“ ‘ Hullo !’ says he, ‘ what are ye about ? Why, who the deuce are *you* ?’

“ ‘ Second mate of the *Phœbe*, alongside,’ says I.

“ ‘ Mate of the *Phœbe*,’ says he ; ‘ then what brings you on board of *us* ?’

“ That was rather a staggerer, but I thought a

bit, and said I wanted to see the captain of the schooner.

"Well, Sir, at this some of the men left off working, and looked up at me as if I was some strange animal.

"‘*Do you?*’ says the officer; ‘then you are the only man aboard that does.’ Then he turned more friendly like, and says, ‘Look here, young gentleman, don’t you go to meet trouble. Wait till it comes to you. Go back to your ship, before *she* sees you.’

“‘She! Who?’

“‘No matter. You sheer off, and leave our captain alone.’

“Now, gentlemen, I’m a good-tempered chap; and you may chaff me till all is blue; but I can’t stand intimidation. If they threaten me, it puts my blood up. At school, if another boy threatened me, I never answered him; my fist used to fly at his mouth as soon as the threat was out of it.”

“Good little boy,” said Lewis.

But the captain was impatient. “Come, Sir, we don’t want your boyish reminiscences: to the point, please.”

“Ay, ay, Sir. Well, then, the moment he threatened me, I just turned my back on him and made for the companion ladder.

“‘Avast there!’ roared the officer, in an awful fright. ‘Nobody uses that ladder but the captain himself and— Man alive, if you *will* see him, follow me.’ So he led me down the main hatch-way. By the chain-eable tier I came all of a sudden on three men in irons; ugly beggars they were, and wild-looking, reckless chaps. One of them ran a spare anklet along the bar, and says to me, ‘Here you are; room for one more.’ But my companion soon stopped his jaw. ‘Silence in irons, or he’ll cut your tongue out,’ says he. He wouldn’t go to the captain with me; but he pointed aft, and whispered, ‘Last cabin but one, starboard side.’ Then he sheered off, and I went for’ard and knocked at the cabin door. No answer; so I knocked louder. No answer; so I turned the handle and opened the door.”

“Young madman!” groaned the captain.

“Not so very. I HAD MY LITTLE PLAN.”

“Oh, he had his little plan,” said Curtis, ironically, pityingly, paternally. Then, hotly, “Go on, Sir; don’t keep us on tenter-hooks, like this.”

“Well, captain, I opened that door, and oh, my eye! it wasn’t a cabin; it was a nobleman’s drawing-room: pile carpet an inch thick; beautiful painted ceiling; so many mirrors down to the ground, and opposite each other, they made it look

like a big palace ; satin-wood tables ; luxurious couches and chairs ; a polished brass stove, but all the door-handles silver ; venetians, and rose-colored blinds and curtains. The sun just forced its way through, and made every thing pink. It was a regular paradise ; but, instead of an angel, there was a great hulking chap, squatted cross-legged on an ottoman at the further end, smoking a hookah as long and twisty as a boa-constrictor. The beggar wasn't smoking honest tobacco neither, but mixed with rose leaves and cinnamon shavings, and, in my opinion, a little opium, for he turned up his eyes like an owl in paradise."

"Not so very formidable, then."

"Formidable ? — well, I wouldn't answer for that, at the proper time, and at the head of his cut-throats ; for he was a precious big chap, with black brows, and a wicked-looking mustache and tuft. He was the sort of chap that nigger who smothers his wife in the play says he *kill-ed*, 'a malignant and a turbaned Turk,' you know. But then it wasn't his fighting hour ; he was in smoker's paradise, and it's my belief you might have marched up to him and knocked him on the head — like one of those devil-may-care penguins that won't budge for a cannon-ball — and then he would have gone smoking on the ground till you cut his head off and took away his pipe.

But you'll find the 'Malignant' had a protector, worse luck, and one that didn't smoke spice, but only looked it. Well, captain, I came up to the nearest table, and hit it pretty hard with my fist, to see if I could make that thundering picture jump."

"What picture?"

"Why, the 'Malignant and the Turbaned' Devil a bit. He took no notice. So then I bawled at the beggar: 'Your most obedient, Sir; I'm the second mate of the *Phœbe*, lying alongside, and the captain has sent me to compare longitudes.'

"The 'Malignant' took no notice; just glared at me, and smoked his pipe. He looked just like that 'Malignant Turban' that plays whist with you by machinery in London, and fixes his stony eyes on you all the time; but, with me bawling at him, a door opened, and in came a flood of light, and, in the middle of it—O Lord!"

"Well, what?"

"Just the loveliest woman I ever clapped eye on. The vision took me all aback, and I suppose I stared at her as hard as the 'Malignant' was staring at vacaney; for she smiled at my astonishment, and made me a sort of a haughty courtesy, and waved her hand for me to sit down. Then says she, mighty civil—too civil by half—'Have

I the pleasure of addressing the captain of that beautiful ship ?'

" 'I'm her second officer, ma'am,' says I ; but I was too dazzled by her beauty to make her up any lies all in a moment.

" 'Bound for China ?' says she, like honey.

" 'Yes, ma'am.'

" 'A large crew ?' says she, like treacle.

" 'About ninety, ma'am,' says I, very short, for I began to smell a rat.

" 'Many European sailors among them ?' says she.

" So then I saw what the beautiful fiend would be at, and I said, 'About fifty.'

" 'Indeed !' says she, smiling like Judas. ' You know ladies will be curious, and I could only count twenty-five.'

" 'The rest were below, coiling ropes,' says I.

" So she laughed at that, and said, ' But I saw plenty of Lascars.'

" 'Oh, our Lascars are picked men,' says I.

" 'I wish you joy of them,' she says ; ' we don't have them here : not to be trusted in EMERGENCIES, you know.'

" While I was swallowing this last pill, she at me again. Did we often exercise our guns ? I said of course we did, in a calm. ' Why,' said she, ' that is not much use ; the art is to be able

to hit ships and *things* as you are rising or falling on the waves—so they *tell* me,' says she, correcting herself.

"The beautiful devil made my blood run cold. She knew too much.

"'What is your cargo?' says she, just as if she was our bosom-friend. But I wouldn't stand any more of it. 'Nutmegs,' says I. So she laughed, and said, 'Well, but seriously?' So then I thought chaffing her would do no good, and I told her we had landed the valuable part of our cargo at Bombay, and had only a lot of grates and fire-irons left. I put on a friendly tone, all sham, like hers, you know, and told her that tea ships depended on the cargo they brought home, not on the odds and ends they took out just to ballast the craft."

"Well, what was the next thing?"

"Oh, I remember she touched a silver bell, and a brown girl, in loose trousers and cocked-up shoes and a turban, came in with a gold tray—or it might be silver gilt—and a decanter of wine; and the lovely demon said, 'Pour out some wine, Zulema.'

"'No, thank you, ma'am,' said I. So she laughed, and said it wasn't poisoned. She sent off the slave, and filled two glasses, with the loveliest white hand, and such a diamond on it. She

began drinking to me, and of course I did the same to her. 'Here's to our next merry meeting,' said she. My blood ran a little cold at that; but I finished my liquor. It was no use flying a white feather; so says I, 'Here's to the Corsair's bride.' Her eyes twinkled, but she made me a civil courtesy.

"That's prime Madeira," says I.

"She said yes, it had been their companion in several cruises.

"It runs through a fellow like oil," says I.

"Then have some more," said she.

"So I did, and then she did not say any more, and the 'Malignant' sat mum-chance: and I was pumped dry, and quite at a loss. So, not to look like a fool, I—asked 'em to breakfast."

"What! Who?"

"Why, the lady and gentleman: I mean the 'Malignant' and 'the Corsair's bride.'"

"Young madman!"

"Why, what harm could that do, captain?"

"What good could it do? What did they say?"

"She said, 'Are there any ladies aboard?'

"I said, 'Yes, and tip-top fashionable ones.'

"So then she looked at the 'Malignant,' and he never moved a muscle. So then she said, 'We will do ourselves the pleasure—IF WE ARE IN COM-

PANY,' and she smiled ever so knowingly, did that beautiful demon.

"Then I pretended cheerful. 'That is all right,' said I. 'Mind, I shall tell the ladies, and they will be awfully disappointed if you don't come.'

"'I assure you,' says she, 'we will come, IF WE ARE IN COMPANY. I give you my hand on it,' says she, and she put out her hand. It was lovely and white, but I looked at it as if 'twas the devil's claw; but I had to take it, or walk the plank; so I did take it, and—O Lord, would you believe it?—she gave mine such a squeeze."

LEWIS. "Gammon!"

CASTOR. "I tell you she gave my flipper the most delicious squeeze you ever—it was so long, and soft, and gentle."

CURTIS. "But what was it for?"

CASTOR. "At the time I thought it was to encourage me; for she said, ever so softly, 'You are a brave man.' But more likely it was to delude me and put me off my guard. Well, I was for sheering off after that, and I made a low bow to the 'Malignant.' He never got up, but he showed his little bit o' breeding, took the snake-pipe out of his mouth, and brought his head slowly down, an inch a minute, till he looked like pitch-poling over on to the floor and cutting a somersault; and, while he was going down and up again,

the lady said, ' You had better wait a minute.' It was in a very particular way she said it; and she flew to a telegraph, and her white hands went clacking at an awful rate; and I can not get it out of my head that if those white hands hadn't worked those wires, I should have been cut in pieces at the cabin door. Not that I cared so very much for that. I HAD MY LITTLE PLAN. However, she left off clacking just as that old picture got his figure-head above his bows again; so I made my bow to 'em both, and sheered off; and blest if that elderly officer does not meet me at the door, and march before me to the quarter-deck; and there's another officer hailing my boat; and there were fine scarlet silk side-ropes fixed, and two men standing by them. So I came away in state. But I'm no wiser than I went. Whether it is an Eastern prince, out on pleasure, or a first-class pirate, I don't know. I hope you will order a tip-top breakfast, captain, for the honor of the ship; lobster curry, for one thing; and sharpen cutlasses and clean small-arms; and borrow all Mr. Greaves's revolvers; he is taking out quite a cargo of 'em: and that reminds me I forgot to tell you what my little plan was that made me so sauey. I borrowed one of Greaves's six-shooters; here it is, and at the first sign of treachery I wasn't going to waste powder, but

just cut back and kill the 'Malignant' and the 'Corsair's bride ;' for I argued they wouldn't have a successor ready, and ten to one they would have a quarrel who was to take the command ; so that would save our hooker at the expense of one hand, and him a bachelor. Nobody minds a bachelor getting snuffed out."

Upon Mr. Castor revealing his little plan, the other officers insisted on shaking hands with him. At which he stared, but consented heartily ; and finding himself in such unexpected favor, repeated his advice. "Prepare an excellent breakfast for to-morrow, and grind cutlasses, and load the guns with grape, and get all the small-arms loaded, especially revolvers ; for," said Castor, "*I think* they mean to board us to-night, cut all our throats, ravish the women, and scuttle the craft, when they have rifled her ; but if they don't, I'm *sure* they will come to breakfast. She gave me her hand on that, and the turbaned Turk nodded his thundering old piratical figure-head."

The other officers agreed with him that the ship would probably be attacked that night, and all possible preparations were made for her defense. They barred the ports on the main-deck, charged the cannon with grape, armed the Lasars with cutlasses, and the white men with

muskets as well, and the officers and the boatswain with cutlasses and revolvers.

The sun set, and all was now grim expectation and anxiety. No watch was called, for the whole crew was the watch.

The moon came out, and showed the cutter, like a black snake, lying abominably near.

Hour after hour dragged by in chill suspense. Each bell, as it was struck, rang like a solemn knell.

Midnight came, and passed. Morning approached.

The best time for attacking seemed to have passed.

Fears began to lessen—hopes to glow.

The elastic Castor began to transfer his whole anxiety to the cook and his mate, standing firm to his theory that the Corsair and his bride would come to breakfast, if they did not attack the ship that night. The captain poohpoohed this; and indeed Castor persuaded nobody but the cook. Him he so flattered about his fish patties and lobster curries, etc., that he believed any thing.

Day broke, and the ship's company and officers breathed freely. Some turned in. But still the schooner was closely watched by many eyes and deck glasses, and keenly suspected.

Soon after eight bells there was a movement

on board the schooner; and this was immediately reported by Mr. Castor, then in charge of the ship, to Captain Curtis. He came on deck directly.

"You are right, Sir," said he, handling his glass, "and they are lowering a boat. He is coming. And—by Jove, they are rigging a whip! There's a lady. Mr. Castor, rig a whip on the main-yard. Bear a hand there, forward. Bosen, attend the side. Here, sling this chair. Smart, now—they are shoving off."

Six able oarsmen brought the Corsair and his bride, with race-horse speed, from the schooner to the ship.

But there were smart fellows on board the *Phœbe* too. There was a shrill wind of the boatswain's pipe-call, the side was promptly manned, the chair lowered into the schooner's boat as she came alongside, and gently hoisted, with the lady in it, and she was landed on the deck of the *Phœbe*.

She had a thick veil on.

The commander of the schooner drew up beside her, and Captain Curtis came forward, and the two commanders off hats and bowed.

The captain of the schooner was now gorgeous in a beautiful light blue uniform, the cloth glossy as velvet and heavy with silver, as was also his cap. The captain led the way to the cabin. His

guests followed. The ladies were duly informed, and dropped in one after another. Then the Corsair's bride removed her veil, and revealed a truly beautiful woman, in the prime of youth, with a divine complexion, and eyes almost purple, so deep was their blue.

Captain Curtis seated this dazzling creature to his right, and, to the surprise of the company, her companion immediately seated himself on her other side. The ladies looked at each other and smiled, as much as to say, "He is jealous; and no great wonder." However, they talked to her across the body of her lord, and she to them, and she was a most piquant addition to the table, and full of spirit. She seemed devoted to her companion.

For all that, she had a letter in her pocket, which she intended to confide to one of those ladies she had never seen before in all her life; and she was now quietly examining their faces and judging their voices, as she conversed with them, merely to make the best selection of a confidante she could.

The breakfast did honor to the ship, and the Corsair praised the lobster curry, and made himself very agreeable all round.

Presently one of the ladies said to Mr. Castor, "But where is Mr. Greaves?" Castor told her

he had been disabled by a shot a lubberly gunner had dropped on his foot, and was confined to his cabin.

"Oh dear," said the lady; "poor Mr. Greaves! How unlucky he is!"

"Is it one of your officers?" asked the strange lady, quietly.

"No, ma'am; he is a Queen's officer, lieutenant of the *Centaur*, going out with us as passenger."

Then the lady changed color, but said nothing, and speedily turned the conversation; but the Corsair looked black as thunder, and became rather silent all of a sudden.

The ladies rose, and invited the fair stranger to go with them.

"Please excuse her," said the Corsair, in a civil but commanding tone.

She seemed indifferent.

Soon after this an officer came in, and said, joyfully, "Wind from the *nor'west*."

"Ah!" said the stranger; "then we must leave you, Sir. Come on deck, dear."

When they got on deck, the lady said, rather pettishly, "Wind? I feel no wind." Thereupon Mr. Castor pointed out to her a dark blue line, about eight miles off, on the pale blue water.

"Oh," said she, "that is wind, is it?"

"Yes, ma'am, and a good breeze too; it will

be here in twenty minutes. Why, your boat is gone! Never mind, we will take you."

"By all means," said she, aloud; then, as she turned from him, she said, in a swift whisper, "Sit near me in the boat; I've something for you."

Now this conversation passed at the head of the companion ladder, and Greaves heard the lady's voice, though not the words. He started violently, huddled on his clothes, and would have hobbled on deck; but the boat was brought alongside in full view from the port window of his cabin. He heard her grate the ship's side, and opened the window just as the lady was lowered into the boat. The chair was hoisted. The lady, with her veil down as she had come, took her seat on the stern thwart, beside her companion, Castor sitting at the helm.

"Shove off!" was the word.

Then, as they turned the boat's head round, the lady, who had seen Greaves through her veil, and had time to recognize him in spite of his beard, lifted her veil for one moment, and showed him the face of Ellen Ap Rice—that face he had loved so well, and suffered so cruelly for loving it. That face was now pale and eloquent beyond the power of words. There was self-reproach, a prayer for forgiveness, and, stranger still, a prayer to that injured friend—FOR HELP.

PART III.

THE boat proceeded on her way. Ellen pointed to windward, and said, "See, Edward, the dark line is ever so much nearer us."

Laxton turned his head to windward directly, and some remarks passed between him and Castor.

Ellen had counted on this; she availed herself of it to whip a letter out of her pocket, and write in pencil an address upon the envelope. This she did under a shawl upon her lap. Then she kept quiet, and waited an opportunity to do something more dangerous.

But none came. Laxton sat square with her, and could see every open movement of her hand.

They were within ten yards of the schooner, and the side manned to receive them.

Just then Laxton stood up, and cried out, "Forward there—stand by to loose the jib."

The moment he stood up, Mrs. Laxton whipped the letter out from under her shawl, and held it by her left side, but a little behind her, where nobody could see it, except Castor. She shook it in her fingers very eloquently, to make that officer observe it. Then she leaned a little back,

and held it toward him ; but, with female adroitness, turned it outward in her hand, so that not one of the many eyes in the boat could see it.

A moment of agony, and then she felt fingers much larger and harder than hers take it quietly, and convey it stealthily away. Her panting bosom relieved itself of a sigh.

“ What is the matter ? ” said the watchful Laxton.

“ The matter ? Nothing,” said she.

“ I hope,” said he, “ you are not sorry to return to our humble craft ? ”

“ I have seen none to compare with her,” said she, fencing boldly, but trembling to herself.

The next moment she was on board the schooner, and waited to see the boat off, and also to learn, if possible, whether Castor had her letter all safe, and would take it to its address.

To her consternation she heard Laxton invite Castor to come on board a moment.

She tried to catch Castor’s eye, and warn him to do nothing of the kind.

But the light-hearted officer assented at once, and was on the quarter-deck next moment.

Laxton waved the others to fall back ; but Ellen would not leave them together : she was too apprehensive, knowing what she had just done.

“I have not the honor of knowing your name, Sir ; mine is Edward Laxton.”

“Mine is Dick Castor, Sir, at your service, and yours, ma’am.” And he took this fair opportunity, and gave Ellen a look that made her cheeks burn, for it said, plainly, “Your letter is in safe hands.”

“Well, Mr. Castor,” said Laxton, “you are the sort I want on board this schooner ; you are a man of nerve. Now I have never had a sailing-master yet, because I don’t need one—I am an enthusiast in navigation, have studied it for years, theoretically and practically—but I want a first lieutenant, a man with nerve. What do you say, now ? Five hundred a year, and a swell uniform.”

“Well, Sir, the duds don’t tempt me ; but the pay is very handsome, and the craft is a beauty.”

Laxton bowed ceremoniously. “Let me add,” said he, gravely, “that she is the forerunner of many such vessels. At present, I believe, she is the only armed yacht afloat ; but, looking at the aspect of Europe, we may reasonably hope some nice little war or other will spring up ; then the *Rover* can play an honorable, and, indeed, a lucrative part. My first lieutenant’s prize-money will not be less, I should imagine, than twenty

thousand a year; an agreeable addition to his pay, Sir."

"Delightful!" said Castor. "But they sometimes hang a privateer at the yard-arm; so I should be quite contented with my quiet little five hundred, and peaceful times."

"Well, then, tell 'em to sheer off, and fetch your traps."

"Yes, do, Mr. Castor," said Ellen. "You can send a line, to explain." That was to get her own letter delivered, the sly thing.

Castor shook his head. "Sorry to disoblige you, ma'am, and to refuse you, Sir; but things can't be done that way. A seaman must not desert his ship on her voyage. Catch me in port and make the same offer, I'll jump mast-high at it."

"Well," said Laxton, "what port are you to be caught in?"

"Why, it must be London or Hong-Kong. I shall be three months at Hong-Kong."

Laxton said he had not intended to cruise so far west as that, but he would take a note of it. "You are worth going a little out of the way for," said he.

While he was making his note, "Bang" went a gun from the *Phœbe*, and she was seen hoisting sail with great rapidity; her rigging swarmed with men.

"There, that's for us," said Castor.

"No hurry, Sir," said Laxton; "he is going to tack instead of veering; she'll hang in the wind for half an hour. Forward there—hoist the flying-jib and the foretop-sel. Helm aweather! Veer the ship. Mr. Castor, bid your men hold on. We must not part without a friendly glass."

"Oh no," said Ellen. "I will order it."

Some of the prime Madeira was immediately brought on deck; and while they were all three drinking to each other, the impatient *Phœbe* fired another gun. But Castor took it coolly; he knew Laxton was right, and the ship could not come round on the port tack in a hurry. He drank his second glass, shook hands with Laxton, and then with Mrs. Laxton, received once more an eloquent pressure of her soft hand, and this time returned it, to give her confidence, and looked courage into her eyes, that met his anxiously. Then he put off; and though the *Phœbe* was now nearly a mile off, he easily ran alongside her before she paid off and got her head before the wind.

His mind was in a troubled state. He was dying to know what this lovely woman, who had fallen in love with him so suddenly, had written to him. But he would not open it right in sight of the schooner and so many eyes. He was a very loyal fellow.

At a good distance, he took it carefully out, and his countenance fell; for the letter was sealed, and addressed,

“Lieut. Greaves, R.N.”

Here was a disappointment and a blow to the little amorous romance which Mr. Castor, who, among his other good qualities, was inflammable as tinder, had been constructing ever since the Corsair's bride first drank to him and pressed his hand.

He made a terribly wry face, looking at the letter: but he said to himself, with a little grunt, “Well, there's nothing lost that a friend gets.”

As soon as he had boarded the *Phœbe*, and seen the boat replaced on the davits, the good-natured fellow ran down to Greaves's cabin, and found him sitting dejected, with his head down.

“Cheer up, Mr. Greaves,” cries Castor; “luck is changed. Here is a fair wind, and every rag set, and the loveliest woman I ever clapped eyes on has been and written you a letter; and there it is.”

“It is from *her*!” cried Greaves, and began to open it, all in a tremble. “She is in trouble, Castor. I saw it in her face.”

"Trouble! not she. Schooner A1, and money in both pockets."

"Trouble, I tell you; and great trouble, or she would never have written to me." By this time he had opened the letter, and was busied in the contents. "It wasn't to me she wrote," he sighed. "How could it be?" He read it through, and then handed it to Castor.

The letter ran thus:

"I have written this in hopes I may be able to give it to some lady on board the *Phœbe* or to one of the officers, and that something may be done to rescue me, and prevent some terrible misfortune.

"My husband is a madman. It is his mania to pass for a pirate, and frighten unarmed vessels. Only last week we fell in with a Dutch brig, and he hoisted a black flag with a white death's-head and cross-bones, and fired a shot across the Dutchman's bows. The Dutchman hove to directly, but took to his boats. Then Mr. Laxton thought he had done enough, so he fired a gun to leeward, in token of amity; but the poor Dutchman did not understand, and the crew pulled their boats toward Java Head, full ten miles off, and abandoned their ship. I told him it was too cruel; but he spoke quite harshly to me, and

said that lubbers who didn't know the meaning of a gun to leeward had no business afloat. All I could persuade him to was to sail quite away, and let the poor Dutchmen see they could come back to their ship. She could not fly from them, because she was hove to.

"He tried this experiment on the *Phœbe*, and got the men to join him in it. He told me every word I was to say to the officer. The three who were put in irons had a guinea apiece for it and double grog. He only left off because the officer who came on board was such a brave man, and won his respect directly; for he is as brave as a lion himself. And that is the worst of it; if a frigate caught him playing the pirate, and fired at him, he would be sure to fire back, and court destruction.

"His very crew are so attached to him, and so highly paid—for he is extremely rich—and sailors are so reckless, that I am afraid they would fight almost any body at a distance. But I think if they saw an officer on board in his uniform, and he spoke to them, they would come to their senses; because they are many of them men-of-war's men. But, indeed, I fear he bribed some of them out of the Queen's ships; and I don't know what those men might not do, because they are deserters.

"It is my hope and prayer that the captain and officers of the *Phœbe* will, all of them, tell a great many other captains, especially of armed vessels, not to take the *Rover* for a real pirate, and fire on him, but to come on board, and put him under reasonable restraint for his own sake and that of others at sea.

"As for myself, I believe my own life is hardly safe. He has fits of violence which he can not help, poor fellow, and is very sorry for afterward; but they are becoming more frequent, and he is getting worse in every way.

"But it is not for myself I write these lines, so much as to prevent wholesale mischief. I behaved ill in marrying him, and must take my chance, and perhaps pay my penalty.

"ELLEN LAXTON."

"Well, Castor," said Greaves, eagerly, "what shall we do? Will the captain let you take volunteers and board her?"

"Certainly not! Why, here's a fair wind, and stunsels set to catch every puff."

"For Heaven's sake, take him her letter, and try him."

"I'll do that, but it is no use."

He took the letter, and soon came back with a reply that Captain Curtis sympathized with the

lady, and would make the case known to every master in his service.

"And that is all he is game for!" said Greaves, contemptuously. "Castor, lend me your arm. I can hobble on deck well enough."

He got on deck, and the schooner was three miles to leeward and full a mile astern, with nothing set but her top-sails and flying-jib.

Greaves groaned aloud. "He means to part company. We shall never see her again." He groaned, and went down to his cabin again.

He was mistaken. Laxton was only giving the ship a start, in order to try rates of sailing. He set his magnificent mainsail and foresail and main-jib, and came up with the ship hand over head, the moderate breeze giving him an advantage.

Castor did not tell Greaves, for he thought it would only put him in a passion, and do no good.

So the first intimation Greaves got was at about 4 p.m. He was seated, in deep sorrow, copying his lost sweetheart's letter, in order to carry out her wishes, when the shadow of an enormous jib-sail fell on his paper. He looked up, and saw the schooner gliding majestically alongside, within pistol-shot.

He flew on deck, in spite of his lame foot, and made the wildest propositions. He wanted a broadside fired at the schooner's masts to dis-

able her ; wanted Captain Curtis to take the wind out of her sails, and run on to her, grapple her, and board her.

To all this, as might be supposed, Captain Curtis turned a deaf ear.

“Interfere, with violence, between man and wife, Sir ! Do you think I am as mad as he is ? Attack a commander who has just breakfasted with me, merely because he has got a tile loose ? Pray compose yourself, Mr. Greaves, and don’t talk nonsense. I shall keep my course, and take no notice of his capers. And, Mr. Greaves, I am sorry for you—you are out of luck—but every dog has his day. Be patient, man, for God’s sake, and remember you serve her Majesty, and should be the last to defy the law. You should set an example, Sir.”

This brought that excellent officer to his bearings, and he sat down all of a heap and was silent, but tears of agony came out of his eyes, and presently something occurred that made him start up in fury again.

For Laxton’s quick eye had noticed him and his wild appeals, and he sent down for Mrs. Laxton. When she came up, he said, “My dear, here’s a gentleman on deck who did not breakfast with us. There he sits abaft the mainmast, looking daggers at us. Do you know him ?”

Ellen started.

"Ah, you do know him. Tell me his name."

"His name is Arthur Greaves."

"What, the same that was spooney on you when I sailed into Tenby Harbor?"

"Yes, yes. Pray spare me the sight of the man I wronged so wickedly."

"Spare you the sight, you lying devil! Why, you raised your veil to see him the better." With these words he caught her hastily round the waist with his powerful arm, and held her in that affectionate position while he made his ironical adieux to the ship he was outsailing.

During the above dialogue, the schooner being directly under the ship's lee, the wind was taken out of the swifter craft's sails, and the two vessels hung together a minute; but soon the schooner forged ahead, and glided gradually away, steering a more southerly course; and still those two figures were seen interlaced upon her deck, in spite of the lady's letter in Greaves's possession.

"The hell of impotency," says an old writer. Poor Greaves suffered that hell all the time the schooner ran alongside the ship, and nobody would help him board her, or grapple her, or sink her. Then was added the hell of jealousy; his eyes were blasted and his soul sickened with the actual picture of his old sweetheart embraced by



her lord and master before all the world. He had her letter, addressed, though not written, to him; but Laxton had *her*, and the picture of possession was public. Greaves shook his fist at him with impotent fury, howled impotent curses at him, that every body heard, even the ladies, who had come on deck well pleased, seeing only the surface of things, and were all aghast when Greaves came up all of a sudden, and stormed and raged at what to them was that pretty ship and justly affectionate commander; still more aghast when all this torrent came to a climax, and the strong man fell down in a fit, and was carried, gnashing and foaming and insensible, to his cabin.

On board the schooner all was not so rosy as it looked. Mrs. Laxton, quietly imprisoned by an iron hand, and forced into a pictorial attitude of affection quite out of character with her real sentiments—which at that moment were fear, repugnance, remorse, and shame—quivered and writhed in that velvet-iron embracée: her cheeks were red, at first, with burning blushes; but by degrees they became very pale; her lips quivered, and lost all color; and, soon after Greaves was carried below, her body began to collapse, and at last she was evidently about to faint; but her changeable husband looked in her face, uttered

a cry of dismay, and supported her, with a world of tenderness, into the cabin, and laying her on a sofa, recovered her with all the usual expedients, and then soothed her with the tenderest expressions of solicitude and devotion.

It was not the first time his tyranny had ended in adoration and tenderness. The couple had shed many tears of reconciliation: but the finest fabric wears out in time; and the blest shade of Lord Byron must forgive me if I declare that even “Pique her and soothe by turns” may lose its charm by what Shakspeare calls “dannable iteration.” The reader, indeed, might gather as much from Mrs. Laxton’s reply to her husband’s gushing tenderness. “There—there—I know you love me, in your way; and, if you do, please leave me in peace, for I am quite worn out.”

“Queen of my soul, your lightest word is a command,” said the now chivalrous spouse; impressed a delicate kiss upon her brow, and retired, backward, with a gaze of veneration, as from the presence of his sovereign.

This sentiment of excessive veneration did not, however, last twenty-four hours. He thought the matter over, and early next morning he brought a paint-pot into the cabin, and having stirred some of his wife’s mille-fleur into it, proceeded

to draw, and then paint, a certain word over a small cupboard or locker in the state cabin.

Mrs. Laxton came in, and found him so employed. "What a horrid smell!" said she, pettishly. "Paint!"

"What, do you smell it?" said he, in a humble, apologetic tone. "I thought I had succeeded in disguising it with something more agreeable to the nostrils of beauty—the essence of a thousand flowers."

"You have not, then; and what *are* you doing?"

"Painting a word on this locker. A salutary word. Behold, queen of this ship and your husband's heart!" and he showed her the word "DISCIPLINE" beautifully written in large letters and in an arch.

She began to quake a little; but being high-spirited, she said, "Yes, it is a salutary word, and if it had been applied to you when a boy, it would be all the better for you now—and for me too."

"It would," said he, gravely. "But *I* had no true friend to correct the little faults of youth. You have. You have a husband, who knows how to sail a woman. '*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re,*' that's the rule, when one is blessed, and honored, and tormented, with the charge of capricious beauty."

Then Mrs. Laxton took fright, and said, cajol-

ingly, she really believed he was the wisest man upon the seas.

As he was, at all events, one of the vainest, this so gratified him that no further allusion to her faults was made that day.

The next morning two sailors had a fight for the affections of Susan Tucker, Mrs. Laxton's Welsh maid, whom he had made her color and rig out as Zulema, in that little comedy with Castor.

Thereupon Laxton complained to her, and said, "I can not have the peace of the vessel disturbed by that hussy. I shall discharge her."

"What, into the sea, dear?" said Mrs. Laxton, rather pertly.

"No, love. Though I don't see why I shouldn't launch her in an open boat, with a compass, and a loaf, and a barrel of water, and a bottle of hair oil—she uses that, the nasty little pig. That sort of thing has been done, on less provocation, to Captain Blyth, and many others. No, I shall fire across the bows of the first homeward-bound—"

Mrs. Laxton uttered a loud sigh of dismay.

—"And send that little apple of discord back to its own orchard in South Wales—he! he! he!"

This was no laughing matter to poor Mrs. Laxton. She clasped her hands. "Oh, Edward, show me some mercy! I have never been without a

woman about me. Oh, pray don't let me be alone in a ship, surrounded by men, and not one woman!"

"For shame, Ellen!" said he, severely. "You are a pirate's bride, and must rise above your sex. I devote myself to your service as lady's-maid. It would be odd indeed if a man who can pass a weather earing, couldn't humble-cum-stumble a woman's stays."

"That is not it. If she goes, my life will not be safe."

"Not safe! with me to look after it!"

"No, you villain!—you hypocrite! If she goes, my life will not be safe from *you*." She was wild with anger and fear.

"These are hard words," said he, sorrowfully. Then, firmly, "I see the time has come for discipline;" and though his words were wondrous calm, he seized her suddenly by the nape of the neck. She uttered one scream; the next he stopped with his other hand, and she bit it to the bone; but he never winced. "Come," said he, "I'll use no unnecessary violence. '*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*,' is the sailing order;" and in a few moments she was bundled, struggling violently, into the locker, and the key turned on her.

Though his hand bled freely, he kept his word, and used no unnecessary violence, provided you

grant him, by way of postulate, that it was *necessary* to put her into that locker at all. Only as she fought and bit and scratched and kicked and wriggled her very best, the necessary violence was considerable.

That was her fault, not his, he conceived. He used no unnecessary violence. He now got a napkin and tied up his hand. Then he took a centre-bit and bored holes in the paneled door.

This, he informed his prisoner, was necessary. "Without a constant supply of fresh air, you would be uncomfortable; and your comfort is very dear to me."

He then remarked that she ought to have a sentinel. Respect, as well as safe custody, demanded that; and, as he was his own factotum, he would discharge that function. Accordingly, he marched past the locker, to and fro, without ceasing, till there was a knock at his cabin door, and a sail reported to leeward.

"Homeward bound?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Then close up with her, and get my gig ready to board her."

When he came near her, it proved to be one of Mr. Green's tea ships; so he fired a gun to leeward, instead of sending a shot across her bows; and then he launched his gig, with Susan blub-

bering in the stern-sheets, and her clothes in a hammock.

The ship, for a wonder, condescended to slack her main-sheet, and the boat, being very swift, ran up to her astern, and the officer in command of the boat offered forty pounds for a passage.

They happened to want a female servant, and so they took her, with a little grumbling; and she got her fare, or the greater portion of it, paid her for wages at Southampton. So I am told, however.

The pursuit and capture of the ship, and the hoisting on board of Susan, were all reported, during their actual progress, with great bonhomie, to Mrs. Laxton, through her air-holes, by her spouse and sentinel, and received with sobbing and sullen tears.

When the boat came back, Laxton put on a bright and cheerful air. "There," said he to his prisoner, "the bone of contention is gone, and peace is restored—nautical peace and domestic peace. Aren't you glad?"

No answer.

"Don't be sulky, dear. That shows a bad disposition, and calls for discipline. Open your mind to me. This is the cellular system, universally approved. How do you find it work? How do

you feel, love? A little—subjugated—eh? Tell the truth now."

"Yes; quite subjugated," said a faint voice. "Pray let me out."

"With pleasure, dear. Why did you not ask me before?"

He opened the door, and there was the poor woman, crouched in a cupboard that only just held her, seated on the ground with her knees half-way to her chin. She came out with her eyes as wild as any beast of the forest that had been caught in a trap, and tottered to a seat. She ran her white hands recklessly into her hair, and rocked herself. "O my God!" she cried. "Susan gone; and I am alone with a madman! I'm a lost woman!"

Laxton pitied her distress, and set himself to cool her fears. "Don't talk like that, dearest," said he; "a little discipline is wholesome. What have you to fear from a man whose sportive ensign, no doubt, is a death's-head and cross-bones; but his motto is '*Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.*' Look here; here is an ensanguined cloth. Mine is the only blood that has been shed in our little loving encounter; the only blood that ever shall be shed between us, sweet tigress of my soul."

"Forgive me!" said she, trembling all over. "I was so frightened."

"Forgive you, dearest? Why, you know a bite from you is sweeter to me than a kiss from any other woman. It was rapturous. Bite me again, love; scratch me; beat me. Sweet, darling Nelly, teach a brute and ruffian to dare to discipline his lovely queen."

"No, no. I won't touch you. You don't love me."

"Not love you? Ah! cruel Nelly! What man ever loved a woman as I love you?"

"Give me a proof; some better proof than locking me up in that horrid hole."

"Any proof you like."

"Take me on shore. I'm not a sailor; and I begin to pine for the land."

"Of course you do," said Laxton, who was now all indulgence. "Choose your land at once. There's Australia to leeward."

"Yes, six thousand miles. Let us go to China, and drink tea together, dear, fresh gathered."

"The desire is natural," said Laxton, like a nurse making life sweet to a refractory child. "I'll go on deck and alter her course directly. By-the-bye, where did that Castor say I should find him?"

Thus, even in her deplorable condition, and just let out of prison, did a terrified but masterly woman manipulate her maniac.

But what she endured in the course of a very few days was enough to unhinge a lady for life. Laxton took to brooding, and often passed his hand over his brow with a weird, terrified look. Then she watched him with terror. On deck he went into furies about the most trifling things, and threatened his best seamen with the cat.

Ellen could hear his voice raging above, and sat trembling as his step came down the ladder after these explosions. But at the cabin door he deposited violence, and his mania took another turn. He disciplined her every day, and it seemed to cool him. She made no resistance, and they conversed amicably on different sides of the prison, she admitting that discipline was good for her mind.

After a time she would say, "Edward, I'm sorry to say this contracted position pains my limbs."

"We must provide for that. I'll build another yacht, with more room in it—for *every thing*."

"Do, dear; and, meantime, I am afraid I must ask you to let me out."

"Oh, by all means. Every thing must give way to your comfort."

Unfortunately, Mr. Laxton, as his reason became weaker, set up a spy; and this fellow wormed out that one of the crew had seen Castor take a letter on the sly from Mrs. Laxton. This upset

his mind altogether. He burst in upon her, looking fearful. "So you write love-letters to strangers, do you?" he roared.

"No, no. Who dares say so?"

"Who dares deny it? You were seen to give one to that Castor, a man you had only spoken to once, you false-hearted, adulterous hussy!"

"It was only a letter to my father."

"Liar! it was a love-letter. And that Greaves couldn't show his face, but you must unveil to him.—Damnation!—There! you are driving me mad. But you shall not escape, nor your paramours elect. I know where to find *them*; and *you* I've got."

The poor creature began to shiver. "I am full of faults," she whimpered. "Discipline me, dear. You will mend me in time."

"No, Judas!" roared the madman. "I have disciplined you in vain. Discipline! it is wasted on such a character. I must try EXTINCTION."

"What, would you kill me, Edward?"

"Dead as a herring."

"God have mercy on me!"

"That's *His* affair; *mine* is to see that you deceive and delude no more able navigators, and drive them mad. But don't you think I'm going to shed your blood. I'm too fond of you, traitress—viper—hussy—demon of deceit. And don't

you think you shall die alone. No. You shall perish with your Castor and your Greaves, cursed triumvirate. I know where to find them both. This very day I'll catch them, and lash them to the furniture, scuttle my beloved schooner, and set the water bubbling slowly up till it sucks you all three down to the bottom. Sit down on that ottoman, if you please, loveliest and wickedest of all God's creatures."

"I will not. I will scream if you lay a hand on me."

"In that case," said he, "you will drive me to a thing I detest, and that is violence." And he drew out a revolver.

Then she put up her quivering hands, and, pale and quaking in every limb, submitted. She sat down on the ottoman, and he produced some gold cord and fine silk cord. With the silk he tied her hair most artistically to the table, and with the gold cord he bound her hands behind her back, and reduced her to utter helplessness. This done with great care and dexterity, he bade her observe, with a sneer, that his revolver was not loaded. He loaded it and another before her eyes, put them in his pocket, locked the cabin, and went on deck, leaving her more dead than alive.

PART IV.

ALL this time the schooner had been running thirteen knots an hour before a southwest breeze, and Laxton soon saw a port under his lee, with many ships at anchor. The sight fired his poor brain ; he unfurled two black pennants with a white head and crossed bones, one at each of his mast-heads, and flew a similar ensign at his main-peak, and so stood in for the anchorage, like a black kite swooping into a poultry-yard.

Greaves soon came to from his fit ; but he had a racking pain across the brow, and the doctor dreaded brain-fever. However, a violent bleeding relieved the sufferer, and Nature, relenting, sent this much-enduring man a long, heavy sleep, whence he awoke with an even pulse, but fell into a sullen, dogged state of mind, sustained only by some vague and not very reasonable hope of vengeance.

But now the ladies interfered ; from one to another they had picked up some of his story. He was the one hero of romance in the ship ; and, his ill luck, bodily and mental, before their eyes, their hearts melted with pity, and they came to the rescue. However timid a single lady may be, four

can find courage, when acting in concert. They visited him in his cabin in pairs ; they made him in one day, by division of labor, a fine cloth shoe for his bad foot ; they petted him, and poured consolation on him ; and one of them, Mrs. General Meredith, who had a mellow, sympathetic voice, after beating coyly about the bush a bit, wormed his whole story out of him, and instantly told it to the others, and they were quite happy the rest of the voyage, having a real live love story to talk over. Mrs. Meredith gave him her address at Hong-Kong, and made him promise to call on her.

At last they reached that port, and the passengers dispersed. Greaves went on board the *Centaur*, and was heartily welcomed.

He reported his arrival to the admiral, and fell at once into the routine of duty. He intended to confide in his good-natured friend the second mate, but was deterred by hearing that a new steam-corvette was about to be dispatched to the island to look after pirates. She was to be ready in less than a month.

Nothing was more likely than that the admiral would give the command to his flag-lieutenant. Indeed, the chances were five to one. So Greaves said to himself, "I'll hold my tongue about that madman, and then if I have the good luck to fall

in with him, I can pretend to take him for a pirate, and board him, and rescue her."

So he held his tongue, and in due course it was notified to him that he was to command the corvette, as soon as her armament should be complete.

It did not escape Lieutenant Greaves that the mad cruiser might be cruising in Polynesia while he was groping the Chinese islands with his corvette. Still there was a chance; and as it seemed the only one, his sad heart clung to it. In England, time and a serious malady had closed his wound; but the sight of Ellen's face, pale and unhappy, and the possession of her letter, which proved that she feared her husband more than she loved him, had opened his wound again, and renewed all his love and all his pain.

But while he was waiting and sickening with impatience at the delays in fitting out his corvette for service, an incident occurred that struck all his plans aside in a moment, and taught him how impossible it is for a man to foresee what a single day may bring forth.

Admiral Hervey was on the quarter-deck of the *Centaur*, and a group of his officers conversing to leeward of him, at a respectful distance, when suddenly a schooner, making for the port, hoisted a black flag, with death's-head and cross-bones

at her mast-heads and her main-peak, and came bowling in. She steered right for the *Centaur*, just shaved her stern, ran on about a cable's length, hove up in the wind, and anchored between the flag-ship and the port she was watching.

It really looked as if this comic pirate meant to pour his little broadside into the mighty *Centaur*, and get blown out of the water in a moment.

Then Greaves began to ask himself whether he was right not to tell the admiral all about this vessel. But while he hesitated, that worthy did not. He grinned at the absurdity of the thing, but he frowned at the impudence. "This won't do," he said. Then, turning toward his officers, "Lieutenant Greaves!"

"Sir."

"Take an armed party, and bring the master of that schooner to me."

"Ay, Sir."

In a very few minutes, Lieutenant Greaves, with two boats containing armed sailors and marines, and the union-jack flying, put off from the *Centaur* and boarded the schooner.

At sight of his cocked hat, the schooner's men slunk forward and abandoned their commander. He sat aft, on a barrel of gunpowder, a revolver in each hand, and vociferated.

Greaves stepped up, and fixed his eye on him.

He was raving mad, and dangerous. Greaves ordered two stout fellows to go round him, while he advanced. Then, still fixing his eye on the maniac, he so mesmerized him that he did not notice the other assailants. At one moment they pinned him behind, and Greaves bounded on him like a cat. Bang!—bang!—went two shots, ploughing the deck, and Laxton was secured and tied, and bundled, shrieking, cursing, and foaming, on board one of the boats, and taken to the flag-ship.

Meantime, Greaves stepped forward, and said a few words to the men: "Now then, Jack, do you want to get into trouble?"

The men's caps went off in a moment, "No, your honor; it ain't our fault."

"Then strike those ridiculous colors, and fly your union-jack at the main-peak; this schooner is under royal command for the present."

"Ay, ay, Sir."

This was done in a moment, and meantime Greaves ran down the companion ladder, and knocked at the cabin door.

No answer.

Knocked again, and listened.

He heard a faint moan.

He drew back as far as he could, ran furiously at the door, and gave it such a tremendous kick

with his sound foot that the lock gave way, and the door burst open.

Then the scared Ellen saw a cocked hat in the doorway, and the next moment her old lover was by her side, untying her hair, and cutting the ligatures carefully, with tender ejaculations of pity.

"Oh, Arthur!" she sobbed. "Ah! go away—he will kill us both."

"No, no; don't you be frightened. He is under arrest; and I command the schooner, by the admiral's orders. Don't tremble so, darling; it is all over. Why, you are under the guns of the flag-ship, and you have got me. Oh, my poor Ellen! did ever I think to see you used like this?"

So then they had a cry together; and he said every thing in the world to comfort her.

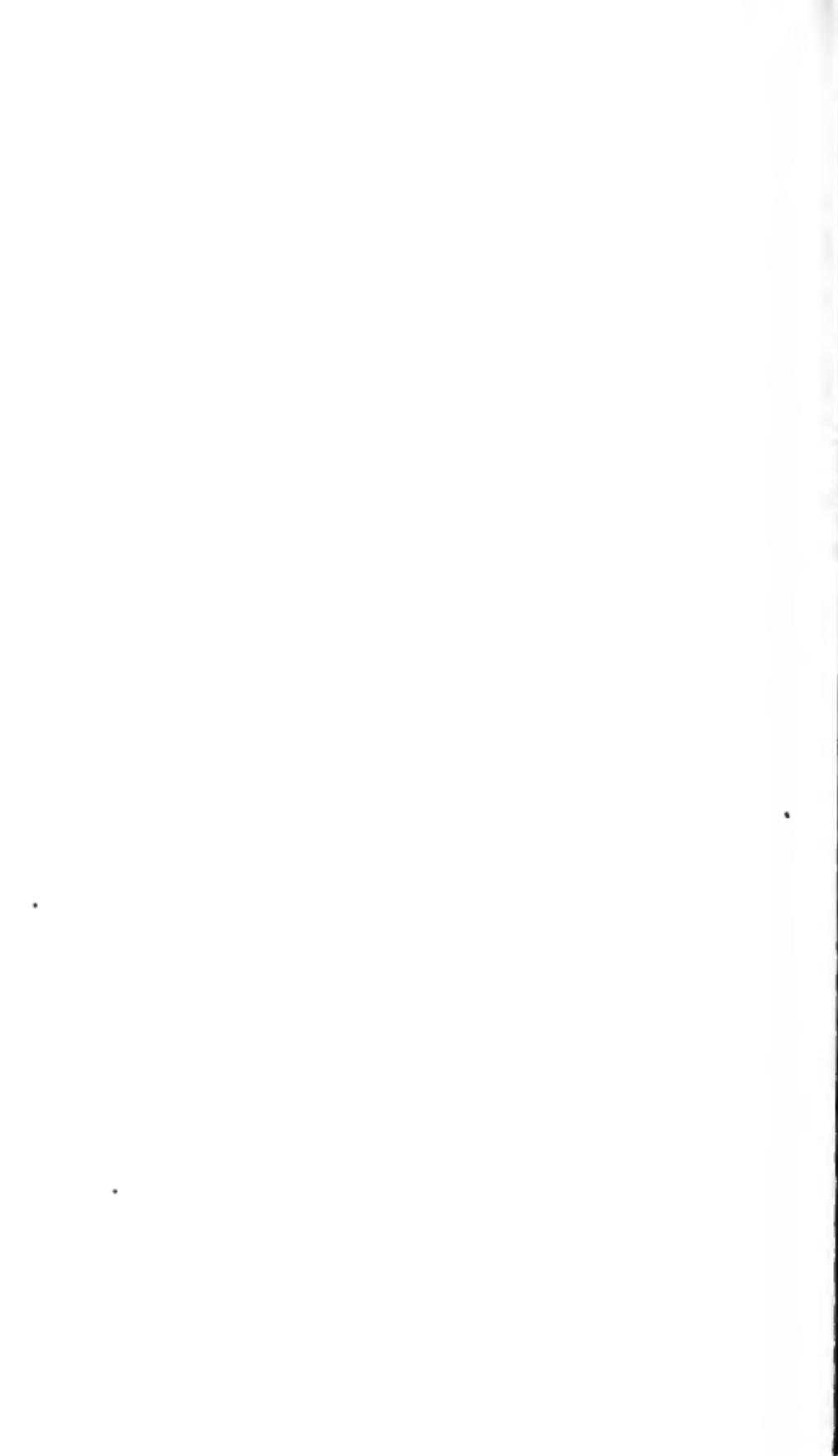
But it was not to be done in a moment. The bonds were gone, but the outrage remained. "I want a woman," she cried, and hid her face. "Arthur, bring me a woman."

"That I will," said he; and, seeing paper and envelopes on a table, he dashed off a line to the admiral:

"Lady on board the schooner in great distress. May I send her ashore to female friends?"

He sent the remaining boat off with this, and the answer came back directly:





"Act according to your discretion. You can go ashore."

As soon as he got this, he told Mrs. Laxton he would take her to Mrs. General Meredith, or invite that lady on board.

Mrs. Laxton said she felt unable to move; so then Greaves dispatched a midshipman in the boat, with a hasty line, and assisted Mrs. Laxton to the sofa, and, holding her hand, begged her to dismiss all her fears.

She was too shaken, however, to do that, and sat crying and quivering; she seemed ashamed too, and humiliated. So this honest fellow, thinking she would perhaps be glad if he left her, placed two marines at her cabin door, to give her confidence, and went on deck and gave some orders, which were promptly obeyed.

But very soon he was sent for to the cabin. "Pray don't desert me," said Mrs. Laxton. "The sight of you gives me courage." After a while she said, "Ah, you return good for evil."

"Don't talk like that," said he. "Why, I am the happiest fellow afloat now. I got your letter. But I never thought I should be so happy as to rescue you."

"Happy!" said she. "I shall never be happy again. And I don't believe you will. Pray don't forget I am a married woman."

"I don't forget that."

"Married to a madman. I hope no harm will come to him."

"I will take care no harm comes to *you*."

Then Greaves, who had read no French novels, and respected the marriage tie, became more distant and respectful, and to encourage her, said, "Mrs. Laxton, the lady I have sent to, admired you on board the ship, and I am sure, if she gets my letter, she will do more for you than a poor fellow like me can, now you are out of danger. She is a general's wife, and was very kind to me."

"You are very good and thoughtful," said Mrs. Laxton.

Then there was an awkward silence, and it was broken by the arrival of the boat, with General Meredith and his wife.

Greaves got them on board the schooner, shook hands with the lady, and proposed to her to see Mrs. Laxton alone.

"You are right," said she.

Greaves showed her to the cabin ; and I don't know all that passed, but in a very short time these ladies, who had never met but once, were kissing each other, with wet eyes.

Mrs. Meredith insisted on taking her new friend home with her. Mrs. Laxton acquiesced joyfully ;

and, for oncee, a basket of lady's clothes was pack-ed in five minutes.

The boat put off again, and Greaves looked sad. So Mrs. Meredith smiled to him, and said, "You know where to find us. Don't be long."

Greaves watched the boat till it was lost among the small shipping, then placed the midshipman in charge, and went at once on board the flag-ship.

Here he heard that the master of the schooner had been taken on the quarter-deek, and request-ed, civilly enough, to explain his extraordinary conduct; but had sworn at the admiral, and called him an old woman; whereupon the admiral had not shown any anger, but had said, "Clap him in irons," coneluding that was what he expected and desired.

Then this doughty sailor, Greaves, who had been going to kill his rival at sight, etc., was seized with compunction the moment that rival was powerless. He went boldly to the admiral, and asked leave to give information. He handed him Mrs. Laxton's letter.

"Oh," said the admiral, "then he is mad."

"As a March hare, Sir. And I'm afraid putting him in irons will make him worse. It is a case for a lunatic asylum."

"You won't find one here; but the marine hospital has a ward for lunatics. I know that,

for we had to send a foretop-man there last week. I'll give you an order, and you can take him ashore at once."

Then Greaves actually took the poor wretch who had wrecked his happiness, and was now himself a wreck, on board a boat, and conveyed him to the hospital, and instructed the manager not to show him any unnecessary severity, but to guard against self-destruction.

Then he went directly to Mrs. Meredith and reported what he had done.

Mrs. Laxton, in spite of all remonstrance, would go and see her husband that night ; but she found him in a strait-waistcoat, foaming and furious, and using such language, she was obliged to retire horror-stricken.

About five in the morning he burst a blood-vessel in the brain, and at noon next day all his troubles were over.

Mrs. Laxton mourned him, and buried him, and Greaves held aloof, not liking to go near her just now ; for he was too frank and simple to pretend he shared her grief. Yet he had sense enough to understand that, at such a time, a generous spirit remembers only a man's good qualities ; and Laxton had many ; but, even when he married Ellen Ap Rice, the seeds were in him of that malady which destroyed him at last.

However, if Greaves was out of the widow's sight, he was not out of her mind, for Mrs. Meredith knew his whole tale, and told her how he had gone to Tenby, and had taken her marriage to heart, and had been at death's door in London.

At last Greaves called, having the excuse of a message from the admiral. He wished to know if Mrs. Laxton would sell eight of her guns to the government, and also allow her sailors to be drafted into his ships, all but two, that number being sufficient to take care of her vessel in port.

Mrs. Laxton said, "I shall do nothing of the kind, without *your* advice, Arthur—Mr. Greaves. Why, how am I to get home?"

Then Greaves advised her to sell the guns, for they were worse than useless; but to part with the men only on condition that the admiral would man the schooner, "when required," with new hands, that had never played tricks at sea under her late commander.

Greaves called once or twice in the course of this negotiation, and thought Ellen had never looked so lovely as in her widow's cap. But he felt bound to abstain from making love, though he was bursting with it, and both ladies saw it, and pretended not.

But one day he came to them in great dismay, and told them the guns had been bought for the

steam-corvette he was to command, and she would be ready in a week, and he should have to go on his cruise. "I am very unfortunate," said he.

The words were scarcely out of his mouth, when his friend, the second lieutenant, was announced. "Beg pardon, ladies; but here's a letter from the admiral, for Greaves; and we all hope it's promotion."

He produced an enormous letter, and, sure enough, Lieutenant Greaves was now a commander. "Hurrah!" shouted the second lieutenant, and retired.

"This would have made me very happy, once," said Greaves; then cast a despairing look at Ellen, and went off, all in a hurry, not to break down.

Then Mrs. Laxton had a cry round her friend's neck.

But next day the same Greaves came in all joyous. "I was a fool," said he. "I forgot the rule of the service. An admiral can't have two commanders. That fine fellow, who came after me with the news, is lieutenant, in my place, and I'm to go home for orders."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" said Ellen. "When must you go?"

"Oh, I dare say I might stay another fortnight or so. When are you going home, Mrs. Laxton?"

"The very first opportunity ; and Mrs. Meredith is to go with me. Won't it be nice?"

"Yes," said he ; "but it would be niceer if I could be third man. But no such luck for me, I suppose."

Those two ladies now put their heads together, and boarded the admiral. He knew Mrs. Meredith ; but was a little surprised, though too true a tar to be displeased. They were received in his cabin, and opened their business.

Mrs. Laxton wanted to go home immediately in her schooner, and she had no crew.

"Well, madam, you are not to suffer for your civility to *us*. We will man your schooner for you in forty-eight hours."

"Oh, thank you, admiral ! But the worst of it is I have no one to command her."

"No sailing-master ?"

"No ; my poor husband sailed her himself."

"Ay, I remember, poor fellow. Besides" (looking at the beautiful widow), "I would not trust you to a sailing-master."

"What we thought, admiral, was, that as we gave up the guns and the sailors, perhaps you would be so kind as to lend us an officer."

"What, out of her Majesty's fleet ? I could not do that. But, now I think of it, I've got the very man for you. Here's Commander Greaves,

going home on his promotion. He is as good an officer as any on the station."

"Oh, admiral, if *you* think so well of him, he will be a godsend to poor us."

"Well, then, he is at your service, ladies; and you could not do better."

Greaves was a proud and joyful man. "My luck has turned," said he.

He ballasted the schooner and provisioned her, at Mrs. Laxton's expense, who had received a large sum of money for her guns. The two ladies occupied the magnificent cabin. He took a humbler berth, weighed anchor, and away for old England.

I shall not give the reader any nautical details of another voyage, but a brief sketch of things distinct from navigation that happened on board.

Mrs. Laxton was coy for some days; then friendly; then affectionate; and, off the Cape, tyrannical. "You are not the Arthur Greaves I remember," said she; "he had not a horrid beard."

"Why, I suffered for not having one," said he.

"What I mean," said she, "you do not awaken in me the associations you would but for that—appendage."

"You wish those associations awakened?"

"I don't know. Do you?"

"Indeed I do."

"Then let me see you as you used to be—Arthur."

The beard came off next morning.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Laxton, and, to do her justice, she felt a little compunction at her tyranny, and disposed to reconcile him to his loss. She was so kind to him that, at Madeira, he asked her to marry him.

"To be sure I will," said she—"some day. Why, I believe we are engaged."

"I am sure of it," said he.

"Then, of course, I *must* marry you. But there's one—little—condition."

"Must I grow a beard again?"

"No. The condition is—I am afraid you won't like it."

"Perhaps not; but I don't care, if I am to be paid by marrying you."

"Well, then, it is—you must leave the service."

"Leave the service! You can not be serious? What, just when I am on the road to the red flag at the fore! Besides, how are we to live? I have no other means at present, and I am not going to wait for dead men's shoes."

"Papa is rich, *dear*, and I can sell the yacht for a trading vessel. She is worth ten thousand pounds, I'm told."

"Oh, then I am to be idle, and eat my wife's bread."

"And butter, *dear*. I promise it shall not be dry bread."

"I prefer a crust, earned like a man."

"You don't mean to say that you won't leave the service to oblige *me, Sir?*"

"Any thing else you like; but I can not leave the service."

"Then I can't marry you, my sailor bold," chanted the tyrannical widow, and retired to her cabin.

She told Mrs. Meredith, and that lady scolded her and lectured her till she pouted and was very nearly crying.

However, she vouchsafed an explanation—
"One requires change. I have been the slave of one man, and now I *must* be the tyrant of another."

Mrs. Meredith suggested that rational freedom would be a sufficient change from her condition under Laxton.

"Rational freedom!" said the widow, contemptuously; "that is neither one thing nor the other. I will be a slave or a tyrant. He will give in, as he did about the beard, if you don't interfere. I'll be cross one day, and affectionate the next, and all sweetness the next. He will soon find out which he likes best, and he will give in, poor dear fellow."

I suppose that in a voyage round the world these arts might have conquered ; but they sighted the Lizard without Greaves yielding, and both were getting unhappy ; so Mrs. Meredith got them together, and proposed she should marry him, and if, in one year after marriage, she insisted on his leaving the service, he would be bound in honor to do so.

"I'm afraid that comes to the same thing," said Greaves.

"No, it does not," said Mrs. Meredith. "Long before a year she will have given up her nonsensical notion that wives can be happy tyrannizing over the man they love, and you will be master."

"Aha!" said Mrs. Laxton, "we shall see."

This being settled, Ellen suddenly appeared with her engaged ring on her finger, and was so owing that Greaves was almost in heaven. They anded Mrs. Meredith, with all the honors, at Plymouth, and telegraphed the Mayor of Tenby. Next day they sailed into the Welsh harbor, and landed. They were both received with open arms by the mayor and old Dewar ; and it was the happiest house in Wales.

Ellen staid at home ; but Greaves lived on board the ship till the wedding day.

Ellen, still on the doctrine of opposition, would be cried in church, because the last time she had

been married by license, and, as she had sailed away from church the first time, she would travel by land, and no farther than St. David's.

They were soon back at Tenby; and she ordered Greaves to take her on board the yacht, with a black leather bag.

"Take that into the cabin, dear," said she.

Then she took some curious keys out of her pocket, and opened a secret place that nobody would have discovered. She showed him a great many bags of gold and a pile of bank-notes. "We are not so very poor, Arthur," said she. "You will have a little butter to your bread. You know I promised you should. And there is money settled on me; and he left me a great deal of money, besides, when he was in his senses, poor fellow. I could not tell before; or papa would have had it settled on me, and that lowers a husband. Being hen-pecked a *very little—quite privately*—does not," said she, cajolingly.

Greaves was delighted, within certain limits. "I am glad to find you are rich," said he. "But I hope you won't make me leave the service. Money is not every thing."

"I promise never to discharge you from *my* service, dear. I know your value too well."

They spent a happy fortnight in Tenby, as man and wife.

One day they walked on the south sands, and somehow found themselves in Merlin's Cave.

Here Ellen sat, with her head on that faithful shoulder, and he looking down on her with inexpressible tenderness.

Presently she gave a scream, and started up, and was out of the cavern in a moment. He followed her, a little alarmed. "What is the matter?"

"Oh, Arthur, a dream! Such a dreadful one! I dreamed I played you false, and married a gentleman with a beard, and he was mad, and took me all round the world, and ill-used me, and tied me by the hair, and you rescued me; and then I found, too late, it was you I esteemed and loved, and so we were parted forever. Oh, what a dream! *And so vivid!*"

"How extraordinary!" said he. "Would you believe I dreamed that I lost you in that very way, and was awfully ill, and went to sea again, and found you lashed to a table by your beautiful hair, and lost to me forever?"

"Poor Arthur! What a blessing it was only a dream!"

Soon after this little historical arrangement they settled in London; and Mrs. Greaves, being as beautiful as ever, and extremely rich, exerted her powers of pleasing to advance her husband's

interests. The consequence is, he remains in the service, but is at present employed in the Education Department. She no longer says he must leave the service; her complaint now is that she loves him too well to govern him properly. But she is firm on this, that, if he takes a command, she shall go with him; and she will do it, too.

Her ripe beauty is dazzling; she is known to be rich. The young fellows look from her to her husband, and say, "What on earth could she have seen in that man, to marry him?"

I wonder how many of these young swells will vie with him in earnest, and earn a lovely woman both by doing and suffering!

THE END.

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